

Record number of MPs to retire before next election

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

FROM the moment the House of Commons returns on January 13, an election battle will be underway but of the present Commons' 650 MPs a record number will have fought their last fight. Eighty MPs have said they will retire or fight under new colours at the general election, which many MPs expect to be called for May 7.

Whatever happens then, the new Commons will lose one of its most commanding presences. Margaret Thatcher will not contest the Finchley seat held since 1959. Leaving with her will be ten former members of her cabinets: Sir Ian Gilmour, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Nigel Lawson, John Moore, Cecil Parkinson, Nicholas Ridley, Norman Tebbit, John Wakeham, Peter Walker and George Younger.

Also leaving are another 15 former Tory from-benchers: Julian Amery, Sir Peter Blaikie, Robert Boscawen, Sir Bernard Braine, Sir Alan Glynn, Sir Geoffrey Finsberg, Sir Ian Gilmour, Sir Alan Glynn, Sir Philip Goodhart, Sir Peter Luce, Sir Neil Macfarlane, Sir Peter Morrison, and Sir Timothy Raison.

On the Labour side the best-known names bowing out are Michael Foot, Dennis Healey, Mervyn Rees and Jack Ashley, the deaf champion of the disabled.

Mr Healey, ex-chancellor, ex-defence secretary, name-dropper extraordinary and probably the best leader Labour never had, is departing from Leeds East, while the man who beat him to the party's top honour, Michael Foot, is to end a parliamentary career which began in 1945.

Nine of the Conservatives who have already decided to leave have collected the knighthoods which Mrs Thatcher bestowed on long-time servants of the party, including two of the oldest, Sir Alan Glynn, aged 71, and Sir John Stokes, 72. Robin

Maxwell-Hyslop, the maverick procedural expert who has sat for Tiverton since 1960, will leave without such a handle. He is believed to have been one of the few to decline such a reward.

The retirement of Robert Boscawen, a longtime Tory whip and member for Somerset and Frome, will deprive the Commons of its last holder of the Military Cross.

The departure of Sir Ian Lloyd (Havant) will lose the South African government a doughty defender and that of Sir John Fair, 67 (Harborough), will deprive the field sports fraternity of a voice.

Racing buffs will need a new representative and the campaign for proportional representation will be weakened on the departure of Sir Charles Morrison (Devizes).

Departing comparatively early are former whip William Benyon (Milton Keynes) at 60, and one-time journalists Peter Ross, 59 (Bewdley), and David Mudd, 56 (Falmouth and Camborne).

More surprisingly, Christopher Hawkins is to leave marginal High Peak at only 52 and Michael Latham, widely considered unlucky not to have held ministerial office, quits Rutland and Melton at 47. Mr Latham, a housing expert, has lost the taste for the crudities of party battle.

In Labour's ranks, the miners group is losing traditional stalwarts in former energy minister Alex Eadie (Midlothian) and Michael Welsh (Doncaster North). Allen McKay (Barnsley West and Penistone) has a life's work in steel and coal industries behind him.

Rotherham's Stan Crowther, who was twice mayor of the town, is going out at 64. Other distinctive northern voices quitting are those of Ted Garrett (Walsend) at 69 and Ted Leadbeater (Hartlepool) at 70. Former teacher Martin Flannery, now 71, is leaving Sheffield, Hillsborough, and Co-op stalwart Harry Ewing, a former Scottish Office Minister, leaves Falkirk East at 59.

Dick Douglas, who left the Labour party over what he saw as its repressive opposition to the poll tax, will this time fight the seat held by Labour's Scottish spokesman Donald Dewar as a Scottish Nationalist. Another Scot

for Labour, Sir David Price, Keith Raffan, Sir Timothy Raison, Sir Robert Rhodes-Jones, Nicholas Ridley, Julian Ridsdale, Peter Rost, Sir Michael Shaw, Ivor Stanbrook, Sir John Stokes, Norman Rabett, Margaret Thatcher, Peter Walker, John Wakeham, Sir Dennis Walters, Kenneth Warren, Mike Woodcock, George Younger

MPs STANDING DOWN THIS YEAR

CONSERVATIVE

MP	Constituency	New candidate
Julian Amery	Brighton Pavilion	Derek Spencer
William Benyon	Milton Keynes SW	Barry Legg
Sir Peter Blaikie	Blackpool South	Nick Hawkins
Robert Boscawen	Somerset and Frome	
Sir Bernard Braine	Castle Point	Mark Robinson
John Brown	Wellingborough	Roger Spindler
Sir Anthony Buck	Colchester North	Gerry Venables
Sir William Clark	Croydon South	Bernard Jenkin
Sir Paul Dean	Woolwich	Richard Ottaway
Sir John Farr	Harrow	Liam Fox
Sir Geoffrey Finsberg	Hampstead and Highgate	Edward Garnier
Sir Ian Gilmour	Cheshire and Amersham	Oliver Letwin
Sir Alan Glynn	Windlesham and Molesey	Cheryl Gillan
Sir Philip Goodhart	Beckenham	Michael Trend
Sir Eldon Griffiths	Bury St Edmunds	Piers Merchant
Christopher Hawkins	High Peak	Richard Spring
Sir Barney Hayhoe	Brentford and Isleworth	Charles Hendry
Sir Geoffrey Howe	East Surrey	Nir Deva
Sir Charles Irving	Cheltenham	Paul Ainsworth
Michael Latham	Rutland and Melton	John Taylor
Nigel Lawson	Babbs	Alan Duncan
Sir Peter Raffan	Shrewsbury and Atcham	Andrew Robathan
Sir Timothy Raison	Havant	Michael Stephen
Sir Robert McCrindle	Brentwood and Ongar	David Willetts
Sir Michael McNair-Wilson	Newbury	Eric Pickles
Sir Robin Maxwell-Hyslop	Tiverton	Judith Chaplin
Sir Alan Meyer	Chelmsford North West	Angela Browning
Sir Hel Miller	Bromsgrove	Rod Richards
Norman McCormick	Blackpool North	Roy Thompson
John Moore	Croydon Central	Harold Eleston
Sir Charles Morrison	Debden	Sir Paul Beresford
Sir Peter Morrison	City of Chester	Michael Ancram
David Mudd	Fleetwood and Wyre	Gyles Brandreth
Cecil Parkinson	Hartlepool	Sebastian Coe
Sir David Price	Hesthwaite	James Clappison
Keith Raffan	Eastleigh	Stephen Milligan
Sir Timothy Raison	Delyn	Michael Whitty
Sir Robert Rhodes-Jones	Ayresbury	David Lidington
Nicholas Ridley	Cambridge	Mark Bishop
Sir Julian Ridsdale	Gloucester and Tewkesbury	Geoffrey Clifton-Brown
Peter Rost	Harrow	Iain Sproat
Sir Michael Shaw	Erewash	Angela Knight
Ivor Stanbrook	Scarborough	John Sykes
Sir John Stokes	Orpington	John Horam
Norman Rabett	Hawthornes and St. Cuthbert	Warren Hawley
Margaret Thatcher	Chingford	Iain Duncan-Smith
Peter Walker	Finchley	Hartley Booth
John Wakeham	Worcester	Peter Luff
Sir Dennis Walters	Colchester S and Maldon	John Whittingdale
Kenneth Warren	Westbury and Rye	David Fisher
Mike Woodcock	Elmstone Port and Neston	Jacqui Lat
George Younger	Ayr	Andrew Pearce
	LABOUR	Phil Gallie
Peter Archer	Warley West	John Speller
Jack Ashley	Stockport on Trent S	George Sherriffson
Sir Edward Leigh	Edinburgh Leith	Malcolm Chisholm
Sir Alan Crozier	Dunfermline W	James Royle
Dick Douglas	Sheffield	Rachel Squire
Sir Patrick Duffy	Attercliffe	Clive Betts
Harry Ewing	Falkirk East	Michael Connarty
Alex Eddie	Midlothian	Eric Clarke
Martin Flannery	Sheffield	Helen Jackson
Michael Foot	Hillsborough	Llewellyn Smith
Ted Garrett	Blaenau Gwent	Stephen Byers
Frank Haynes	Walsend	Gordon Moon
Denis Healey	Ashfield	George Mudie
Denis Howell	Leeds East	Roger Gosdiff
John Hughes	Birmingham	Robert Ainsworth
David Lamble	Small Heath	Brian Donohoe
James Lamond	Coventry NE	Bryan Davies
Ted Leadbetter	Cunningham S	Peter Mandelson
Allan McKay	Ochilburn Central & Royton	Michael Clapham
Michael Welsh	Hartlepool	Kevin Hughes
	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	Liz Lynn
Sir Cyril Smith	Rochdale	Merloneth Nant Conwy Eithyn Llywd
PLAID CYMRU	The SPEAKER	Bernard Weatherill
Dafydd Elis Thomas	Croydon North East (Mr Speaker)	

Mr Weatherill, who contested the last election as the Speaker, was formerly a Conservative.
Former MP — Mr Douglas, formerly a Labour MP, has since switched to the Scottish National Party and will fight Garscadden for the SNP.

Future burns bright for the blue lamp

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE traditional blue police lamp will continue to be suspended outside London police stations as it has since Victorian days, and modern versions will be put up outside new stations by Scotland Yard.

The decision to keep the lamp and to make more use of it is part of a programme to smarten up the appearance of London's stations which have been criticised for being dirty and dishevelled. Early next year the Yard is to begin a £1.8 million redecoration blitz on its worst stations.

The origin of the blue lamp is not known but the idea of a special light to identify the police is widely used round the world. One police historian has traced the lamps back to the early 19th century when Westminster city council decided that all police houses in its area should display lamps to distinguish them from other premises. When gas lamps were introduced blue glass was placed round the lamp

so that the public could see the station. Blue was chosen presumably because it matched the colour of a policeman's uniform.

Not everyone liked the lamps. When Queen Victoria visited the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden she objected to the lamp shining opposite on Bow Street police station and it was taken down.

In the 1950s the legendary career of PC Dixon of Dock Green was launched in a film appropriately called

the Blue Lamp, and for many years afterwards the views and tips of the venerable constable, played by Jack Warner, on such criminal subjects as unit bicycle lights, were passed on to television viewers from beneath the blue lamp at Dock Green police station.

Now the lamp is to stay but the police are moving away from other traditional decorations or advertisements. A rolling programme to improve the police image includes greater use of the

new Metropolitan police logo and the refurbishment of the public counters of London stations which will mean the end of the traditional decoration of fly-blown warnings about cockroaches and posters illustrating Britain's most popular breeds of dog.

The police will repaint 180 police stations in grey and blue during two weeks in February. Civilian staff manning the counters will be given a newly designed uniform.



Jack Warner, and the Dixon of Dock Green cast, under the blue lamp outside their station

Two are remanded in acid attack case

A man and a youth accused of attacking a widow, aged 74, with acid were remanded in custody when they appeared in court yesterday.

Anthony Langton, aged 22, and Jason Raby, aged 17, of the same address in Banbury, Oxfordshire, appeared at a specially convened New Year's day sitting of Banbury magistrates, charged with assaulting Joan Cooper, causing her grievous bodily harm.

They were also accused of aggravated burglary at Mrs Cooper's home in Oxford Road, Banbury, last Friday. Mr Langton and Mr Raby were represented separately and were remanded in custody until January 6. No application for bail was made.

Mrs Cooper was in a stable but poorly condition last night in South Warwickshire Hospital, Warwick.

Straw attacks school closures

More grammar schools have closed under Conservative governments than under Labour since 1970, the shadow education secretary said yesterday. Jack Straw quoted figures from parliamentary answers showing that 469 were closed under the Tories and 421 during Labour governments in that period. There are 148 grammar schools still open.

Mr Straw said: "These figures show a chasm between Tory rhetoric and practice. They come out with unscrupulous attacks on the comprehensive system. But while ever ready to wound, they have been afraid to strike."

Tests attacked, page 3

Fire enquiry

Police were conducting an investigation last night after a man was found burned to death. The body was unrecognisable when discovered after a fire in a house at Banbury, Oxfordshire, early yesterday. Police confirmed that the fire was started deliberately. Neighbours said that a man was seen running from the house soon after the blaze started at 6am, shouting: "You deserved it, you bastard." The house — privately rented and split into bedsits — is used by the district council for homeless people.

Women killed

Three elderly women were found dead in their home in Greater Manchester yesterday, apparently killed by fumes from a heating system. The unnamed women and the body of their dog were discovered by a neighbour who broke into the house at Tyldesley, near Bolton. Heating engineers were called in to discover the source of the fumes. Post-mortem examinations were being carried out on the victims.

Armed combat

A gypsy prize fight ended in gang violence yesterday when two rival groups clashed at a pre-arranged contest at Swan Farm, near Gravesend, Kent. As the fight ended in confusion, one gang wielding shotguns opened fire then escaped in cars and vans before the police arrived. Inspector Mervyn Williams said: "Things got out of hand. We received initial reports of people being shot at."

Looking into it

Birmingham council has commissioned a £6,000 survey to find out what people think of holes in the road after a poll found most locals unhappy with the roads and pavements. Alan Blumenthal, a Tory councillor, said the survey was public money poured down the drain. The city engineers said: "It is essential that in-depth views of the public be obtained to provide detailed understanding of dissatisfaction."

Bridge death

A man fell 60 feet to his death from a footbridge near Kimberley, Nottinghamshire, yesterday and seven other people were hurt in a collision when they stopped their cars to try to help. The dead man, who had not been identified last night, was seen to jump from the bridge soon after 1am, police said. The injured were from two cars which were in collision with a third.

Golden rule

A coroner has ruled that coins worth £20,000 scattered round Portsmouth by a pensioner dubbed Goldfinger are not treasure trove. The gold and silver coins were handed in to the police after the man was seen throwing them into gardens in the North End region last autumn. Officers are renewing efforts to trace the owner.

Bargain hunters bring welcome relief to big stores

EYES aglow, and with a determined step, the hunters closed in for the kill. Making sure that their weapons - chequesbooks, credit cards and spacious bags - were intact, they brooked no opposition and no obstacle was too bulky to get round or through.

The first day of the January sales at Harrods was no place for the very old, the very young or the infirm. Within hours of the doors opening, Harrods was claiming that business was booming. Even before it started, spokesmen predicted that £16,666 would be spent every minute. They could not explain how they arrived at such a prediction.

Putting the press relations type to one side, it does appear that the big London stores have something to celebrate with this year's sales. A Liberty spokeswoman said: "We have done much better than we had expected." Even so, with an upturn in retail business not forecast until spring at the earliest, the stores may well have a difficult winter ahead of them.

Jamie Detmer reports on the opening of the Harrods sale and retailers' hopes for a recovery in the new year

Last year, despite a reasonable January sales performance, Harrods had to make big staff cuts to cope with the stamp.

The Harrods sale was launched by the singer Diana Ross, who arrived in a horse-drawn landau before joining Mohamed Al-Fayed, Harrods chairman, in the traditional opening countdown. Miss Ross was paid nothing for opening the sale. Instead, Harrods donated £50,000 in her name to a scanner appeal at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children.

Miss Ross had clearly been informed of the dangerous nature of her mission. She came well prepared with her own burly minders. "Lovely

to see you," she said with great feeling to nobody in particular. "Go on, Diana," cried the press photographers. "C'mon, lovely," said one as she swung her hips. The thousands of bargain-hunters soon lost interest as the doors swing open.

At the front of the huge queue, which almost stretched the full circle of the building, was Paul Donlon, aged 19, a business student from Sheffield, who wanted to buy cutlery for his parents. "It might seem a little odd coming all the way from Sheffield to buy cutlery, but Harrods is the sale to come to," he said. "We were up at Trafalgar Square last night and we came here at 3.45 in the morning. I was very surprised to find myself first in the queue. The cutlery I am going for is reduced from £52 to £29."

Patrick Dolan, aged 26, of London, bought a 24-in television reduced from £619 to £199. "I came yesterday just to have a look around and I saw this television," he said. "I came straight from work this morning and arrived at 8am."

China, glass and clothes were the big attractions in the sale. Among the bargains were a woman's diamond bracelet, down from £11,000 to £5,500, and a sterling silver centrepiece, reduced from £9,995 to £5,995.

Harrods spokesmen insisted that it was just coincidence that the store started its sale on new year's day, the first time in its 143-year history that it had opened on the first day of the year. They denied that the stamp had had anything to do with it.

"It's the best looking January sale crowd for at least two years, although admittedly it was raining on those occasions," Peter Willasey of Harrods said. "All the indications are very good. Let's hope people are waving goodbye to the recession." Not to be outdone, Michael Cole, another spokesman, declared that the queue was the biggest for five years.

But the big question for retailers is whether the sales can make up for the poor run-up to Christmas.

At Selfridges, which started its January sale on December 27, trade has been brisk.

"The figures are comparable, and in some cases better, than last year," Paul Lambert, personnel director, said. "We have done particularly well in china, crockery, electronic goods and menswear."

A spokeswoman at Liberty said that, so far, the returns on their sale were 20 per cent up on last year.

Diary, page 12



Pot of gold: a shopper examining a porcelain teapot in Harrods yesterday

Hunters chase after popularity

BY RONALD FAUX

FOX hunters in the Lake District are seeking to attract more support for their tradition in the face of opposition from campaigners against blood sports. "We want to see more people supporting the hunt and realising that the hounds perform an essential service in these rural communities," a follower in stout boots and deerstalker said as the Blencathra pack scoured Carrock Fell for a scent. "This hunt has even produced a video explaining exactly what goes on."

Barry Todhunter, the huntsman, cracked a whip that echoed like a pistol shot across the fells. The noise was designed to cause a fox to put its head over the parapet. One did, and the hounds were on to it immediately. The fox passed three-quarters of a mile before being caught and killed.

Another supporter said: "These are not posh hunts. Most of the folk here are country people who enjoy the sight of the hounds streaming across the hillside and who

know the damage some foxes can do."

Mr Todhunter agreed that not all foxes were dangerous to livestock, but said that the ones who were caused havoc.

"A harrier vixen can go crackers and cut a swath through a field of lamb. This is the most natural way of keeping the fox numbers down - animals against animals."

The Cumbrian fell packs together dispatch about 500 foxes from September to May. The hounds then become available to foxers. At least 30 requests for help may be expected every hunting time.

The hunt has faced the anger of protesters by hunt saboteurs and an attempt was made to dig up John Peel's bones from Caldbeck churchyard.

Rain swept across Carrock Fell, dampening the huntsman's bright red jacket and the enthusiasm of followers. The Blencathra called it a day, but not before the fox population had been reduced by four.

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Men nurses sexually harassed by patients

MALE nurses increasingly face sexual harassment, the Royal College of Nursing has said. Women patients whose advances were spurned could also seek revenge by making complaints against the men.

Susan Russell, of the college, said: "This can lead to disciplinary action. In one case, the complaint was eventually found to be groundless but by then the nurse had gone through a lot of trauma and his reputation was put in doubt."

Mrs Russell, who is based in Newcastle upon Tyne, was commenting on a recent report showing that 60 per cent of women nurses at a hospital in the southwest of England were victims of harassment.

"This is a long-standing problem due to a popular image of nurses being women of the world so it doesn't matter if one pinches their bottoms now and again," she said. "However, male nurses are equally unfairly stereo-

typed. They are liable to be thought of as gays or given a 'bit of a lad' image and there are young female patients who make advances to them.

"If a male nurse is sexually harassed and doesn't like it the 'hell hath no fury like a woman spurned' response is possible and he can find himself the subject of allegations."

Mrs Russell said she was angry that nurses of both sexes were harassed as it infringed their liberty and damaged their professional standing.

"Every health authority should adopt a policy against sexual harassment and have people to whom staff can take complaints and know they will be treated sensitively."

• Night nurses at the Queen's medical centre in Nottingham are taking part in a project to reduce hospital crime by telephoning information to a security headquarters on the complex.

US airmen fly back to wartime haunts

BY JOHN SHAW

HUNDREDS of former American servicemen are preparing to return to their old bases in East Anglia this year to mark the 50th anniversary of American entry into the second world war.

Thousands of men and aircraft poured into the region to carry out daylight bombing raids over occupied Europe. Casualties were heavy and the men had a reputation for living it up off duty, often to the music of Glenn Miller's orchestra.

Their return is being co-ordinated by the East Anglia Tourist Board, which has been in contact with ex-servicemen's associations in the United States. Hotels in Norwich have already attracted nearly £500,000 in business, and "half-a-million bed nights" have been booked at the 250-bed Harlequin Hotel at Stansted airport, Essex, where staff will dress in war-

time American uniforms when the main body of servicemen arrives in April. May and June. Stansted began as an American base and the hotel will adapt its menus, a spokesman said, "to give them a taste of what they knew during the war".

More than 170 events have been arranged throughout the region. There will be dances and parties and an air show at the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, Cambridgeshire, featuring an air-worthy B17 bomber and a display devoted to the wartime USAF.

Many servicemen will return to the pubs and villages where they drank and met the locals, and will visit the American military cemetery at Madingley, near Cambridge and Ely Cathedral, the landmark which symbolised for them a safe homecoming after another raid.

'Flawed' tests will waste teaching time, say heads

BY DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

TESTS due to be sat by seven-year-olds this spring are so flawed that they will give false results as well as wasting teaching time, head teachers say.

The National Association of Head Teachers has written to Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, to ask for further changes in the national curriculum tests, after two previous government attempts to make them manageable and realistic.

"We are anxious that, despite the lessons of the last two years, we may be embarking yet again on an assessment process which is technically flawed, is unrealistic in classroom terms and will provide results largely unsupported by any process of standardisation and validation," the association says. It fears that "another cohort of children will lose an unnecessary amount of valuable learning time at a crucial stage in their schooling".

Announcing details of the tests in mathematics, English and science last month, Mr Clarke said that they would be more manageable for teachers and could be taken by whole classes at the same time. He estimated that they should take no more than 30 hours of teaching time.

The association, however, claims that whole-class tests are possible only in written English and that the amount of time suggested by Mr Clarke is unrealistic as it does not take into account the

Schools to seek Gulf boarders

BY JOHN YOUNG

THE virtues of a British public school education are to be advertised to an expected 40,000 Middle East visitors to the fourth annual Gulf Education and Training exhibition in Dubai next week.

The display is being co-ordinated by the Independent Schools Information Service (Isis) as part of an attempt to attract more overseas pupils to compensate for falling demand for boarding at home. Some 200 schools will be represented, including Rugby, Haileybury, Roedean and Mill Hill. Between 1984 and 1990, there was an 8 per cent increase in pupils at fee-paying schools but boarders fell by nearly 10 per cent.

David Woodhead, director of Isis, said that this would be the first time that it had been involved in the exhibition, to run from January 7-10. It would stage similar displays in Hong Kong in February, and in Basle, in May.

British boarding schools were seeking to build on their long tradition of educating pupils from overseas, Mr Woodhead said. About 3 per cent of boarders were the children of foreign nationals and he hoped the proportion would increase.

The Hong Kong exhibition, expected to draw more than 60,000 visitors from throughout south-east Asia, was the most important, Mr Woodhead said. Experience last year in Taiwan and Malaysia had shown that there was a lot of interest in British education, although there was fierce competition from schools in the United States, Canada and Australia.

Record forecast looks a long shot

BY THE year 2000, the world record holder in the marathon may be a woman, according to two American scientists who have studied the records in running events and concluded that men are losing their lead.

By the middle of next century, men can expect to be outpaced in all events from the 200 metres to the marathon if trends continue, the scientists say.

The conclusion was yesterday received sceptically by athletics experts, including a former medical adviser to the British team, Dr Peter Sperry.

Even the two scientists making the claim, Bryan Whipp and Susan Ward, of the School of Medicine at the University of California, concede that, at first sight, it appears improbable. None of the women record holders in any of the events can meet the men's qualifying standard for the 1992 Olympic games. However, that gap is closing, they say.

The scientists have calculated the average speed for men and women over a range of distances for as far back as records are reliable. The results, published today in *Nature*, show a linear increase in speeds for both sexes in all events studied.

Women's speeds, however, are improving markedly faster than men's.

"Despite the pitfalls, we could not resist extrapolating these record progressions into the future," the scientists say. They argue that the rapid improvement of women, if sustained, will take them past men at most distances by the middle of next century.

The earliest test of the theory will come in the marathon, where the improvement in women's speeds has

been especially rapid. The figures suggest that women should be running faster marathons than men by 1998. By then, the world record should be two hours, one minute, 59 seconds.

The oddest feature of the figures is the way in which both men's and women's speeds have increased consistently and linearly since reliable records began - male records at the end of last century, and women's in the 1920s. Different training regimes, improving tracks and greater physiological knowledge are not

discernible in the graphs, which follow virtually identical slopes for all events.

The only differences are that women's speeds are increasing twice as fast as men's, and that marathon speeds for both sexes are improving more rapidly than other events' speeds. The scientists cannot explain this.

Dr Sperry believes that it is wrong to project the lines forward. "If you extrapolate far enough, you run out of common sense," he said. Dr Sperry sees basic physiological differences between

Liz McColgan, the 10,000 metres world champion, said: "Unfortunately, there is no way any woman will ever beat the best man in my event because we simply do not have the physique."

"I suspect the figures don't take full account of the proportionally larger number of medium-standard men runners, and so give a distorted picture of the relative improvements."

In a few highly specialised running events, however, women were already breathing down the necks of male counterparts. Mrs McColgan said: "When it comes to ultra distances of up to 100 miles, we could well close the gap because a woman's body is better suited to going on and on because it has more fat," she said.

Sally Gunnell, silver medallist at this year's world championships in the 400 metres hurdles, said she would welcome a woman surpassing men in that event, but thought the day might be some way off. "The gap is narrowing all the time," she said.

Gunnell: says speed gap is narrowing

McColgan: thinks the figures distort picture

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Barry Zwin

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Grouse shoots bring in £10m

BY JOHN YOUNG

GROUSE shooting contributes more than £10 million to the Scottish economy and generates over 2,300 jobs, a report from Strathclyde University suggests.

Although grouse moors are rarely profitable to their owners, the indirect impact of shooting forms an important part of the Scottish rural economy, the report concludes. Nin

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Knock down eyesores in royal parks, urges design group

BY DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT



Jenkins' report goes to Heseltine next week

A DESIGN code for the royal parks in London, which would lead to the removal of unsightly buildings and parish signs, will be presented to ministers early this month.

The proposal is part of a report on the future of the parks drawn up by a committee chaired by Dame Jennifer Jenkins, the former chairwoman of the National Trust. The 11 members of the committee, who include the architects Terry Farrell and Dame Elizabeth Chesterton, and John Drummond, controller of Radio 3, will deliver their report to Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, next week.

They will set out a design code for

new buildings which will require them to be in keeping with their surroundings. The code will also extend to the design of signs and other outdoor furniture, including lighting and seating.

The report will urge ministers to remove or redesign buildings which the committee regards as eyesores, such as the Lido and a modern boathouse on the Serpentine and what Dame Jennifer termed a "very ugly" block of lavatories in the Italian Garden in Hyde Park.

"Quite a lot of things that have been put up without anyone thinking about how they relate to their surroundings should go," Dame

Jennifer said. "We need to look very carefully at where any new buildings are located."

The design guide has been inspired by the National Trust's policy of ensuring that everything is in keeping with the property.

The report will also call for improved arrangements for large open air events in Hyde Park, such as last year's concert by Luciano Pavarotti, although it is unlikely to recommend new buildings.

The committee has concluded that the most precious aspect of the royal parks is their sense of *rur* in *urb*, bringing the country into the heart of the city. That must be

preserved at all costs, it says.

Opinion polling carried out as part of its study, which began in July, found that more than three quarters of people visiting the parks said they were primarily for the peace and tranquillity. "They talked about the trees, the greenness of the countryside," Dame Jennifer said. "That is something very precious and we must protect that. People value these things, even though some of the parks are coming under great pressure from traffic and the sheer numbers of people."

The committee visited Central Park in New York, Holyrood Palace

park in Edinburgh and parks in Berlin, Stuttgart and Munich. "None of them have the feeling of getting away from the city that Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens offer," Dame Jennifer said. "London's park are unique in offering a sense of going into the country."

The report is to be debated at a one-day conference at the Queen Elizabeth conference centre, Westminster, on March 5 and a limited number of tickets will be available through *The Times*. Anyone wanting a ticket should write to Paul Grice, DoE Royal Parks Division, Room C17/04, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 3EB.

Abducted girl, 9, indecently assaulted

A GIRL aged nine who was rollerskating home from a neighbour's house after an errand for her grandmother was indecently assaulted after being abducted by a passing motorist (Elaine Fogg writes).

The man stopped the girl in Northfield, Birmingham, at 6pm on New Year's eve and drove her three miles to a country lane. Police said that she managed to wind down one of the windows and scream for help before the man threatened her with a pair of scissors.

At Frankley Green, yards from the M5 and just outside Birmingham, he threw the girl out of the car and indecently assaulted her before driving off. She staggered to the road and flagged down a passing motorist who drove her home.

Police said that the man, who was driving a red or brown four-door car, was white, aged 30 to 40, about 5ft 3in with brown hair and heavy stubble. He was wearing a long-sleeved baggy woollen jumper and dark trousers.

Burning floor kills workman

A man died from severe burns while demolishing a derelict house at Ballygowan, Co Down, yesterday. Another man is in hospital but is not seriously injured.

The dead man, who was in his twenties and single, is understood to have intended to burn out the wooden first floor and the roof joists before demolishing the shell. He had poured an inflammable liquid, possibly petrol, over the floor. There was an explosion when the liquid ignited, and, according to the survivor, the dead man was engulfed in a fireball.

Patient dead

Margaret Tulip, aged 77, a psychiatric patient who went missing on New Year's eve from Winton Hospital in Sedgfield, Co Durham, was yesterday found dead on nearby farmland.

High point

A plan to suspend the roofs of locomotives from depot ceilings during maintenance, rather than putting them on the ground, has won Peter Allen, a chargehand at the Toton freight depot in Nottinghamshire, the top £4,500 annual prize from the British Rail suggestion scheme.

Lifer escapes

Brian Curley, aged 30, of Northampton, who was sentenced to life for murder in January 1979, was being hunted by police yesterday after escaping from Derbyshire's low-security Sudbury Prison on New Year's eve.

Old hat

Firemen who feel attached to their old style yellow helmets can buy them at a discount price of 17p. Somerset county council is replacing the coal-scuttle shaped helmets with an American design with visor and neck curtain.

Plant saved

Grass cutting has been banned in part of a cemetery in Ancaster, Lincolnshire, which is more than 50 miles inland, to protect the rare seaside thrift plant which normally grows by the sea.

Washday blues

The West Middlesex Hospital in London is trying to find out why, over the past four months, it has received linen from 68 other hospitals including one in New York as well as hundreds of pillow cases from a shipping line and dozens of businesses.



At bay: Lord Shelburne and his stag-adorned home. He wants changes in the law to let owners set up tax-free maintenance funds

Peer fights to keep heritage a family affair

IN WINTER sunshine Bowood, in Wiltshire, in many ways looks its best. The light streaming through the bare trees reflects off the lake, and the green rolling parkland, which many regard as Capability Brown's loveliest creation, is seasonally empty of visitors.

In another report, *Which?* says that Kwik-Fit, the car repair company, gave some of the worst advice to customers. In an investigation of the eight exhaust specialists, *Which?* says that more than a quarter of the 43 Kwik-Fit branches visited advised an inspector that he needed all or part of a basically sound exhaust replaced.

Overall, more than one in seven of the 204 fast-fit centres surveyed by an undercover inspector driving a four-year-old Metro recommended unnecessary work.

The companies in the report—ATS, Halfords Kwik-Fit, Motor Way, National Smiley, Superdrive and Tyreservices—generally aimed to offer quick, convenient, low-cost services and replacement parts. Some of the advice given to the inspector, who told a mechanic at each centre that there was noise from the exhaust and asked if anything needed doing, was dubious, the survey says. One fitter told him that he needed a new exhaust before asking him what the problem was. Another told him that the part would eventually "go bang".

The only chain to do worse than Kwik-Fit, which has 433 outlets in Britain, was Smiley, with 76 centres based mainly in the North-West. Three out of eight centres visited advised unnecessary work.

John Beishon, director of the Consumers' Association, said: "Unfortunately, Kwik-Fit's record doesn't measure up to the claims made for it. However, we are glad to see that since we compiled our report, Kwik-Fit has re-emphasised and made public its code of practice."

One in four historic country houses has been sold and contents dispersed in the past 20 years, but one lord of the manor has cut costs and introduced golf to avoid asset stripping. John Young reports

appalling," he said. Visitors were down from 155,000 to 120,000 due partly to the recession and the Gulf war, but also to the fact that part of the grounds had to be closed because of storm damage. The net result was a loss of £158,000.

A halving of farm incomes over the past ten years has added to his concern about the future. Until four years ago 3,000 acres of farmland were intensively worked, with four large dairy farms and 1,500 acres under cereal crops. In 1986-87 the return was just £20,000 on a turnover of £1.2 million.

"Obviously we could not go on like that," he said. His answer was to allow the poor-

er grade land to revert to grazing for sheep, and to let the rest on short-term tenancies, and to contract the dairy operation out to independent self-employed farmers.

Although costs have been significantly reduced, none of the Bowood enterprises produces the income needed for the upkeep of the house and grounds. So what do you do? Lord Shelburne asks. "The only way is to sell off capital assets, and that is why I am very despondent."

In a recent letter to Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, he pointed out that since 1972 some 400 historic country houses, more than a quarter of the present total,

had been sold and their contents dispersed.

Seated in his office at Bowood, Lord Shelburne forcefully argues his case for changes in the law to allow owners to establish maintenance funds free of income and capital gains taxes, which could be used only for upkeep and repairs. A condition would be that all properties were opened to the public.

In the past 11 years the government has spent £85 million, about £7.7 million a year, on "rescuing" historic houses for the nation and handing them over to the National Trust or English Heritage.

As a former commissioner of English Heritage, he reckons that the annual cost to the Exchequer of allowing owners to endow their own properties would be no more than £3.7 million a year.

According to the British Tourist Authority, revenue

from overseas visitors last year amounted to £7,700 million and more than half of those questioned said they had come to see historic sites.

But, despite all-party support, his appeals have so far fallen on deaf ears. Lord Shelburne says.

He believes that, without tax relief, Bowood will, like many others, join the list of houses like Kedleston Hall, Calke Abbey and Belton,

which the government has spent millions of pounds on acquiring and endowing. Neither the National Trust nor English Heritage would welcome such a development, and the visiting public would miss the cherished atmosphere of houses still lived in by the families that own them.

"My definition of insolventcy is when income does not match expenditure," he said. "Without change, I think places like this are remarkably unlikely to survive."

Public confused by advice on diet

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A FLOOD of dietary advice has left people confused and still largely ignorant of what constitutes healthy diets.

Some of the strongest opinions on diet come from an age when bread and potatoes were branded unhealthy and fattening, according to a survey of 1,000 people for the Flour Advisory Bureau.

Half believed that pasta and potatoes were fattening, and a third thought the same of bread. Most identified as healthy those foods they perceived to be non-fattening: fish, fruit and vegetables, the survey by Nielsen Consumer Research found. They ignored fibre-rich starch.

foods, even though recent government reports have recommended eating more of them and cutting back on sugars and fat. White bread has a particularly bad image and was perceived as fattening by 52 per cent.

While a quarter were aware that they should be eating more fibre, less than 10 per cent said the same of bread, even though it is a big source of fibre. The reason for the discrepancy is that the advice to consume more fibre collides with the mistaken belief that most sources of fibre are fattening, and that fattening foods are by definition unhealthy.

Wine merchants and growers are permitted to include on their labels only the information specified in the EC wine regulations and these do

Drinkers may get alcohol guide

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

THE government is seeking a change in EC law to require wine growers and merchants to include the number of units of alcohol on their labels. Ministers believe that the change would help the seven million people who drink more than the recommended sensible limits to reduce their consumption.

Wine merchants and growers are permitted to include on their labels only the information specified in the EC wine regulations and these do

not include units of alcohol. But the measure is used in campaigns to encourage people to drink sensibly.

A unit of alcohol is 8 grammes or 10 millilitres of pure alcohol and is roughly equivalent to half a pint of beer, a standard glass of wine or a single public house measure of spirits. A standard 75 centilitre bottle of wine with a strength of 10 per cent alcohol contains 7½ units. The recommended weekly limits are 21 units for men and 14

units for women.

But the measure is used in campaigns to encourage people to drink sensibly.

units for women. Of the seven million estimated to drink more than this, 1.4 million are drinking at levels high enough to damage their health — 50 units for men (equivalent to a bottle of wine a day) and 35 units for women. However, a government survey showed that only 18 per cent of men and 19 per cent of women were aware of those limits.

Alcohol consumption in the UK stood at 7.5 litres a head in 1990.

Glasgow grapefruit will stop the rot

BY KERRY GILL

A DEVICE known as "the grapefruit", which can save trees from Dutch elm disease and extend the life of rotting telegraph poles, has gone into full production in Glasgow.

The device, more technically known as a self-dispersing fluid injector, can be fitted to the side of a piece of timber, where it delivers a controlled application of any preservative required without coming into contact with installation workers. It can be put underground or underwater.

The system, which is the

size and shape of a grapefruit, has been developed by a Glasgow company in collaboration with Glasgow University. It took four years to perfect and has won a NatWest/BP award for technology.

Perhaps its most interesting application is in the preservation of wooden telegraph poles, of which there are nine million in Britain and about 400 million world-wide. Michael Mason, of Unicorn Fluid Injectors, which will produce the dispensers in Glasgow,

plans to sell licences for their manufacture worldwide. "Many of the chemicals previously used in the UK have been banned from use by the Health and Safety Executive," Mr Mason said. "This is because there are health risks when contact is made with humans or animals, and often a detrimental effect on the environment. What we have developed is a unique, safe and effective delivery method. It is the world's first dry system — there are no chemicals contained until after it is fitted."

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Top 10 tips

East yearns for jams tomorrow

EUROPE is heading for a second era of motorisation, environmental destruction and increased vehicle emissions as Eastern European governments embark on ambitious motorway construction schemes.

By linking up with the extensive western European motorway network, the Eastern European countries are hoping to stimulate trade and ease the transition from centrally planned to market economies.

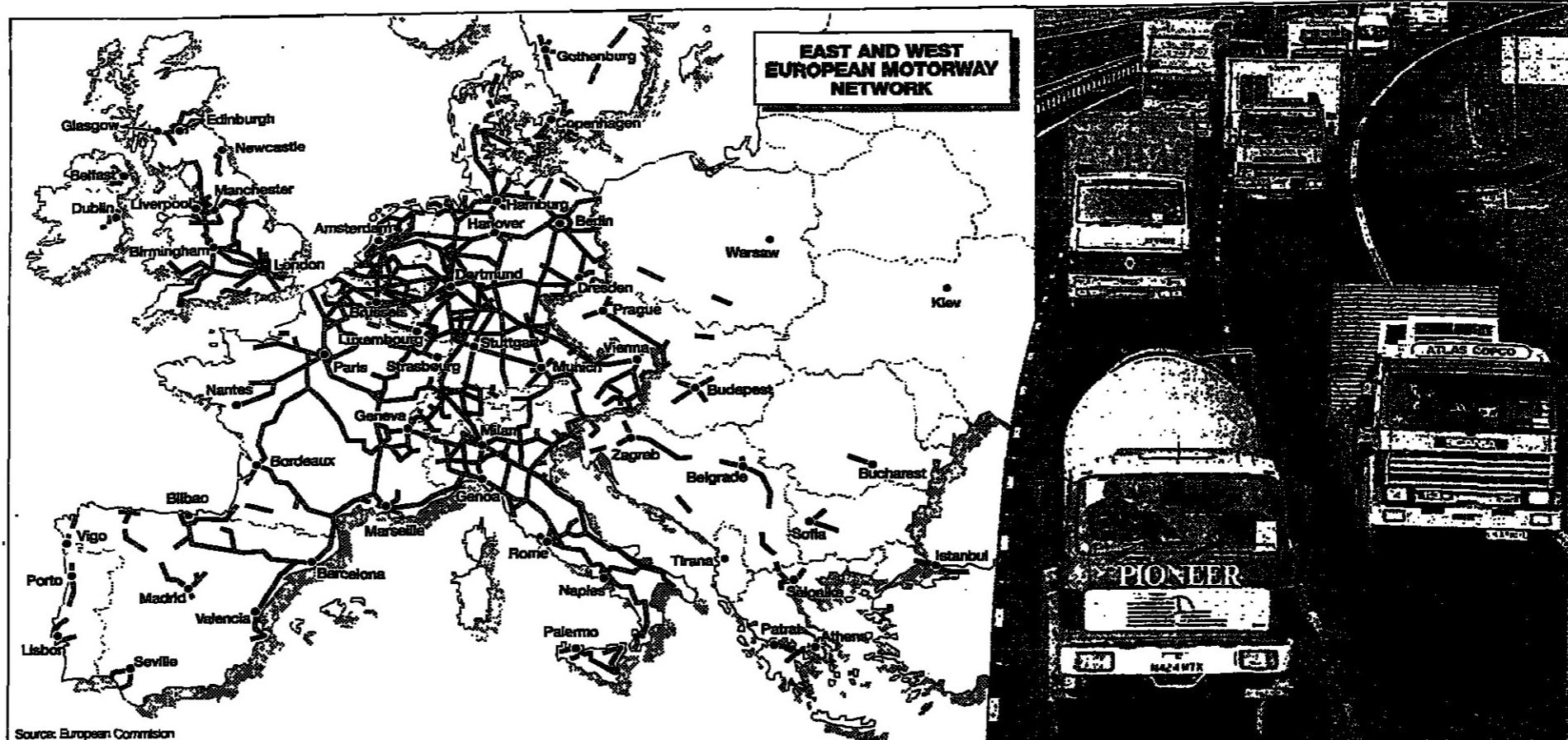
This month, the Hungarian government will invite final bids from international construction companies to build and operate a series of motorway toll roads, the first of which would link Budapest with the west European motorway system via Austria. Similar toll road proposals are also being prepared in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

But the toll road strategy has provoked sharp criticism from some Western transport analysts, who predict that the rush to build new motorways in the east will lead to the gradual decline of public transport, increased environmental damage and more atmospheric pollution.

Jonathan Bray, a prominent critic of Western European road-based transport policies, says that the decision to abandon urban tram sys-

The West may worry about too much traffic, but Eastern Europe equates congestion with progress.

Michael Dynes writes



Joining the queue: Eastern Europe hopes that linking up with the West's motorway system will put its fledgling market economies on the road to revival

tem after the second world war lies at the heart of Britain's transport difficulties. Mr Bray believes that the demise of the tram was the first decisive move away from the promotion of public transport, which was followed by the development of the motorway network. The Beeching rail cuts and the growth of private car ownership.

In a pamphlet warning of the dangers of emulating Western road-based transport policies, Mr Bray said: "The parallels between post-war Britain and post-Stalinist Eastern Europe with regard to light transit are striking." Because of the pressure to find a quick fix, Eastern Europe was opting for a road building strategy at the very moment when Western Europe had become conscious of the high social and environmental costs of private car ownership.

Such criticisms have provoked an equally sharp rebuke from Eastern European transport officials. In an in-

terview with *The Times*, András Timar, the former director of the Hungarian transport research institute, accused critics of naively applying Western solutions to Eastern problems.

Environmental policies which were winning political support in the western half of the continent, with its already extensive motorway network, were seen as tantamount to political suicide in the eastern half, where the motorway in-

fracture was virtually non-existent, Dr Timar said. Eastern Europe's new political élites are struggling with the dilemma of how to satisfy material aspirations without the necessary resources. Dr Timar said that new motorways were the quickest and most effective way of attracting the foreign investment needed to boost economic growth, increase disposable incomes and satisfy the demand for consumer durables.

According to Alastair Dick, a Western transport consultant who has been advising the Hungarian government on how to attract the foreign capital needed to fund the motorway programme, investment aimed at modernising Eastern Europe's extensive but antiquated rail network would not show results as quickly as investment in new motorways. Given the mounting domestic pressures on the new political élites,

rapid results are what matter. Many Western observers fear that there is more than a grain of truth in Mr Bray's predictions. For Eastern Europeans, however, such predictions miss the point. People there aspire to the kind of traffic congestion which has become a feature of Western society. Indeed, their political leaders look forward to the day when traffic congestion is their biggest headache.

AUSTRALIAN scientists have discovered a rare group of tiny shrimp-like crustaceans previously unknown in the Southern Hemisphere, in a remote cave in the north-west of the continent.

The animal, which belongs to the archaic group thermosbaenacea, is thought to have developed more than 200 million years ago. Gary Poore, of the Museum of Victoria, said yesterday.

The shrimp-like animal, only one tenth of an inch long, would be only one of 16 known species of thermosbaenacea.

They are of considerable interest because their distribution is so scattered, according to Bill Humphreys of the Western Australia Museum in Perth, who found the animal.

The closest relative to the new species has been found in the Canary Islands off the African coast and in the Caribbean region, Dr Poore said.

The animal, which lives on the mud at the bottom of caves, was collected by Dr Humphreys from fresh water in a cave on the semi-arid North West Cape peninsula in Western Australia.

The thermosbaenacea is thought to have dispersed by hitching a ride on continental plates as they drifted around the world after the breakup of the ancient super-continent of Pangea and then Gondwana.

The animal is unusual in that its eggs are deposited in a broad pouch on the back of the mother where they develop until they are large enough for independent life.

Taiwan to deport prostitutes

Taipei: Police launched a six-month purge on foreign prostitutes yesterday, especially those from Southeast Asia, Central and South America and South Africa.

Foreign prostitutes would be detained, fined and deported, and those providing places for them to operate such illegal trade would also be punished, the national police administration said. Local police chiefs will also be punished if foreign prostitutes are found operating in their area. (AFP)

Paid to relax

Philadelphia: Without lifting a finger, 18 men are providing NASA with data on muscle metabolism, all for \$100 (£53) a day, complete bed rest and a liquid diet. The study hopes to determine whether supplements of amino acids can slow muscle loss. (AP)

Chewing freely

Singapore: Singaporeans chewing gum will not be prosecuted except where food consumption is prohibited, an environment ministry official said. Singapore has banned the import and sale of chewing gum. (AFP)

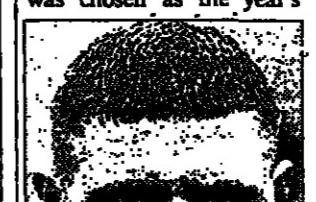
Population rise

Washington: The population of the United States grew by 2.7 million to 253.6 million last year, the US census bureau said. The bureau forecast four million births, 2.1 million deaths and 725,000 immigrants this year. (AFP)

Geordies vote Gazza big bore

Paul Gascoigne has been voted the country's biggest bore by BBC Radio Newcastle listeners because they are tired of his behaviour off the pitch.

The footballer, who is 24, was chosen as the year's



President Bush said that his personal goals for the new year are to jog faster than his current pace of a mile in ten minutes and to catch more fish. He also paid tribute to his Australian tour to his home life: "We are blessed with family, with kids that come home, and with the morality and strength that one gets when one is in public life from sons and a daughter."

Ray Charles, the blind American singer, once tried to drive his car, his son says. "My father had a '63 Corvette, gorgeous car," Ray Charles Jr said on television. "He was at an intersection and he told the valet, 'I want to drive my car home. We're all in the house, right, and we hear this bang! My father pulls out in the intersection and just total out the Corvette'."

Mel Gibson, the American actor who played Hamlet in the 1991 film version and commended the study of Shakespeare in schools video, will receive the Will Award in April from the Shakespeare Theater for furthering classical drama.

John O'Connor, Roman Catholic Cardinal of New York, arrived in Beirut yesterday to assess Lebanon's aid requirements. The cardinal, who is on his fourth trip to Lebanon, is expected to meet President Elias Hrawi, government officials and senior Christian clergymen.

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Children seek shelter from Yugoslavia's demented war

WHEN jets roar over the refugee camp of Mohacs in Hungary, Bosnian runs inside and covers his ears with a pillow. In Osijek, his home in Croatia, he was never bombed



ed from the air, but instinct tells him air power is trouble.

After a while a Red Cross worker tells him it is safe to come out; they were friendly Hungarian planes, not Yugoslav army fighters.

Reassured, Bosnian goes outdoors to play Croatian heroes against Serbian Chetniks.

Psychiatrists say that it will be some time before the full mental damage to thousands of Yugoslav children can be assessed. They sleep, sometimes 16 to a room, in the old workers' military barracks at Mohacs, some seven miles north of the Yugoslav border. Maya, aged 12, says nobody sleeps much: "Somebody is always having a nightmare."

Europe's nightmare is this: 550,000 people forced to leave their homes in the past six months. The United Nations says it is Europe's biggest forced population movement since the second world war.

Apart from Austria, which has taken more than 10,000 refugees, and Hungary, which is taking 12,000 a month, few people seem to be noticing. For most European

The flight of Croats is Europe's biggest exodus since the last war, Roger Boyes writes from Mohacs, southern Hungary

Community leaders, the war is a military or diplomatic problem; the human misery has slipped out of view.

At the Nagayad camp, near Lake Balaton, and the seven reception centres strung along the Hungarian-Yugoslav border, the most visible charities are the Red Cross, Caritas and Médecins du Monde. Young French doctors have been distributing medicines. Most of the adult refugees want tranquillisers.

The Yugoslavs are not as badly off as some refugees. All have a temporary roof, many as guests of families. A Cro-

atian school is starting up in the main camp, and the daily allowance from the Hungarian government, led by József Antall, the prime minister, is generous.

But the main reason for the European neglect is that a large part of this moving population is within Yugoslavia itself. Some 200,000 of the refugees have moved elsewhere within Croatia. And 200,000 Serbs have fled from Croatia to Bosnia or Serbia. Keeping track of such huge shifts is difficult. Some Croatian schoolchildren were, for example, evacuated from Osijek in September to Split on

the Adriatic coast which was then bombed by the Yugoslav army. They ended up in Zagreb, which may also become a target. But the new logic of this war dictates that moving has become more dangerous than staying put and so the children remain.

Many others have fled across the borders. On a map it looks simple to cross from the war zone of Slavonia to peaceful Hungary. But, as the refugees in Mohacs camp report, the border crossing of Udar has long since passed from Croatian into Yugoslav army hands. The passage has to be made across country which, despite army assurances to the contrary, has been mined.

Nobody stops long at Mohacs. The refugees are shuffled on to make room for

others. In the beginning, Croats and ethnic Hungarians drove over the frontier in cars. Now they come on foot, without luggage or warm clothing. A woman aged 34 from near Valpovo said: "I was milking the cows, and the shooting started again so I went indoors and dressed the children, and left my home."

Those who fled from the Baranya region, the corn-bucket of northeast Croatia, have no chance of recovering their homes. At the end of September, the "regional parliament" of the now Serbian-controlled area declared that any home or farmstead not reclaimed in 30 days would be confiscated. The homes will be handed over to Serbian settlers and so the mixed Serbo-Croatian region will become solely Serbian. That



Antall: his government provides generous help

Vance mission, page 1

Ukraine matches Yeltsin price rises

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

FOR the three-quarters of the population of the former Soviet Union who live in Russia and Ukraine, today is day zero. They will wake up this morning to a brave new world in which seven decades of rigid economic centralisation and heavy state subsidies have been declared a "mistake" and everything costs what it costs, not what the state decree it should.

When the shop open today bread and milk will cost up to four times what they cost on Tuesday, butter and cooking oil up to five times as much, train and air tickets will have increased in cost several times over, and even the vodka to bring oblivion will cost more than 20 roubles a bottle, almost two days' average wage last year.

These multiple price rises for "staples" are only a fragment of the picture. Almost all other retail prices and many wholesale prices as well—including prices for agricultural produce—will be allowed to float free.

No one has ventured any credible prediction of what will happen. Many prices could shoot up 10 or 20 times initially, leaving a majority living off the limited diet of "staples" whose price will be regulated, or reduced to paragonising as yet non-existent soup kitchens.

January 2 has been awaited with fear on both sides of the political fence. Russian leaders, starting with President Yeltsin, insist there is no alternative if the country's economic ills are to be cured and have appealed to people not to panic. The architect of the reforms, Yegor Gaidar, assured reporters there would be no civil unrest, despite attempts by pressure groups to organise street protests. The Russian government is

believed to have contingency plans, however, just in case their predictions of calm prove wrong.

The population at large fear the uncertainty above all else. They have experienced sharp overnight price rises before, but there has never before been the prospect of completely open-ended increases. The Russian government has pledged hefty increases in pensions, grants and public sector salaries. Industry and agriculture, however, are being left mostly to look after themselves.

Russia planned its price reforms three months ago, originally naming December 16



Gaidar: says there will be no civil unrest

"day zero". When the commonwealth was founded, Mr Yeltsin agreed to delay for two weeks to give neighbouring republics a chance to catch up. In spite of pressure from Ukraine to delay further, however, he stood firm and Ukraine has been forced to liberalise prices today, too. Belarus follows next week.

Ukraine was caught between two evils. If it held back prices, Russians would come across the republic border in their thousands to plunder Ukraine's cheaper and more

Ukraine and IMF, page 28

THE COST OF STAPLES IN THE FORMER USSR			
Smoked sausage	35.5 per lb	68.2 per lb	34 hours
Chicken	15.5 per lb	35.4 per lb	18 hours
Butter	4.5 per lb	27 hours	27 hours
Macaroni	1.1 per lb	81.1 per lb	4½ hours
White bread	0.32 per lb	not for sale	
Sugar	1.1 per lb	not for sale	
Fresh fish (carp)	5.5 per lb	not for sale	
Milk	0.65 per litre	30 per litre	15 hours
Java cigarettes	0.55 per pack (20)	8	4 hours
Women's dress shoes	420 per pair	1,600	750 hours
Men's dress shoes	250 per pair	1,000	1,000 hours
Child's dress shoes	15 per pair	300	150 hours
Pantyhose	10 per pair	120	60 hours
Women's skirt	200	1,500	750 hours
Petrol	0.40 per litre	3 per litre	½ hours

The first figure is the subsidized state price for each item (in roubles); the second figure is the private market price (in roubles); the third figure is the number of hours a man in the work must work to purchase that item at the private market rate (based on about 175 hours of work a month). The average worker earns 350 roubles a month, equivalent to about £4.37 at the floating exchange rate. Denotes ration coupon required. Source: AP



Unhappy new year: a young woman weeps outside her heavily damaged home in Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, after fierce fighting yesterday between troops loyal to Zviad Gamsakhurdia, president of the republic, and opposition forces led by Tengiz Kitomani

Tbilisi rebels predict fall of parliament building

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN TBILISI

GEORGIA'S rebel national guard commander undertook yesterday to seize the parliament building in Tbilisi within 11 days, even at a high cost in lives. "A storming is inevitable... and it is likely that a lot of people will be killed," Tengiz Kitomani said, going on to describe President Gamsakhurdia, his former boss, as a satan who must be overthrown.

Moments after he spoke to reporters at the former Institute of Marxist Theory, where his forces are based, a new-year lull in the ten-day conflict came to an abrupt end with several hours of single shots and automatic fire. With a well-developed sense of impending danger, residents of the city centre, which only a month ago was one of the most enchanting in the world, began drifting away from the combat zone as the fighting was about to begin.

Mr Kitomani said that the chances of a peaceful settlement between loyalists and rebels had plummeted after the pro-government forces broke a ceasefire and killed

one of his men on Saturday night. World opinion would understand the need to overthrow the president, he said.

Mr Kitomani, an artist, rejected Mr Gamsakhurdia's authority last August after being told to stand down his fledgeling army as a concession to the leaders of the abortive Moscow coup. Flanked by unshaven fighters whose spirits seemed undimmed by the spartan conditions in which they had entered 1992, with only glasses of local brandy to celebrate, Mr Kitomani predicted that the task of toppling the president would be completed by January 13.

"We will all be back in our homes by the old calendar New Year's day," he declared, claiming that the president, hiding in the basement of parliament a few hundred yards away, had surrounded himself with teenage boys and girls as a shield against attack.

Neither this, nor the suggestion from other opposition commanders that disarray broke out in the embattled

government building, could be confirmed by the few visitors able to brave a hall of bullets to enter the premises. The several hundred fighters guarding the president were reported to be more nervous than before, but in nothing like the disarray that wishful opposition thinking has tried to convey.

A coalition of local parties opposed to the president announced its intention yesterday of forming a provisional government which would claim supreme authority in a republic where the machinery of government and ordinary police work has ground to a halt. But the success of this project, launched by moderate parliamentarians along with more radical figures like Gi Chanturia, who has just escaped from jail, will probably depend on the military outcome of a stand-off involving artillery pieces, armoured cars and small tanks.

Jaba Ioseliani, the pro-opposition militia commander who escaped from custody with Chanturia, is reported to have threatened to break open a jail containing hundreds of criminals unless about 70 of his volunteers are released.

Fighters in the opposition camp said that at least 14 of their fellow soldiers were prisoners of pro-government forces, and they were likely to have been tortured, beaten and injected with drugs, to judge by the account of one comrade who escaped from hospital.

Upwards of 70 people are feared to have died in a conflict that increased sharply on December 22, a low figure when set against the vast quantity of ammunition that has been used in the once elegant street, whose historic opera and theatre buildings have both been damaged.

Perhaps for the first time, the programme contained something close to a political message. "Remember," said the professor, "that however hard it is for you, it is even harder for your mother and father. Do all you can to help your correspondent."

"Of course we will," chorused the puppets in reply. Thus will Khrushka, Filya and Stepashka make their small contribution to social stability this winter.

Revival plan shows darker side of Brittany resort

Feuding over a new breakwater project off the port of Trébeurden has turned neighbour against neighbour, Philip Jacobson writes from Paris

For the first time in memory, the new year was ushered in without official celebrations in the little Breton seaside resort of Trébeurden, where feuding over a seashore development project has turned neighbour against neighbour.

There were no festive decorations, no fairy lights, and gossip in the bars around the old harbour was mostly about what 1992 would bring in the saga of the "forbidden breakwater". For almost two years this unattractive stone construction has been reaching out from Trozoul beach, once a favourite spot for holidaymakers to set out their sunshades and deck chairs.

Now some 300 yards long and surrounded by iron piles driven into the sea where building work on a marina with berths for 560 pleasure boats has been going on, the breakwater dominates the front.

The project, almost 90 per cent complete, should have been finished last summer, but it ran into stiff opposition from a lobby uniting some of the town's 3,000 residents in a common front with ecologists concerned about the impact of such development on this stretch of the rugged pink granite coastline of northern Brittany. Nine months ago the authorities ordered the work stopped, and although the developers subsequently submitted modifications that allowed them to continue, a Rennes court issued another order to stop work a few days before Christmas.

The argument rages, too, between people who have known each other all their lives but cannot agree on what is good or bad for Trébeurden. M Guennec is still in jail, having been charged formally, and his supporters plan more demonstrations. Unconcerned, the cold seas off the remains of Trozoul beach still slap at the breakwater where the trouble began.



say they hope to see the construction declared illegal and torn down. "It was never more than an exercise in pure megalomania and the state must pay for letting it go ahead," one prominent activist said.

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EC flag raised in Lisbon

FROM REUTER IN LISBON

PORUGAL took over the European Community presidency for the first time yesterday and said the EC represented a beacon of stability and progress in a turbulent world.

President Soares and António Cavaco Silva, the prime minister, watched the Community's flag hoisted at the new Belem Cultural Centre, where most EC meetings will be held during Portugal's six months in office.

Senhor Soares said earlier in his New Year message to the nation that the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe had created a "tremendously complex" situation and the Yugoslav conflict had brought war to Europe for the first time in 46 years.

TV puppets do their bit for stability

BY MARY DEJEVSKY

PRESIDENTS may come and go, the state may vanish from the map, but one comforting feature of life goes on: some time between 8 and 9pm a blue sky covered with stars appears on television screens and a tinkling tune whisks viewers into the magic and innocent world of Khrushka the pig, Stepashka the rabbit, and Filya the dog.

Good Night, Children has been on the air for 27 years, a product, like Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, of Khrushchev's cultural thaw. The puppets are battered. Khrushka (pigs say "khrush khrush" in Russian) has a chipped ear. But the grip of his little pink trotters, in the hands of actress Natalya Derzhavina, is as firm as ever.

Khrushka is the darling of the programme. He has a



penchant for practical jokes and mild disobedience. His voice has the serious, piping tone of Russian children, and he gets several hundred phone calls every day. Filya, a floppy-eared shaggy dog of indeterminate breed, is the sort to whom things have to be explained several times, slowly and in words of one syllable. The grey rabbit, Stepashka (a mock-rustic name), is Khrushka's stooge. Easily led, he has ears which wag in opposite directions when he is excited.

What all the characters have in common is their kindness and lack of malice. They have also, in spite of the programme's captive audience and virtual monopoly of children's broadcasting, been entirely free of politics. From time to time they dispense gentle lessons in survival: which mushrooms not to pick, the perils of ignoring pedestrian traffic lights, the wisdom of asking a policeman the way, but nothing more didactic than that.

Early in December, *Good Night, Children* was trans-

ferred to a new studio near the centre of town to the vast empire of State Television on the northern outskirts. The move was completed in time for the new-year programme to be taped, with the participation of five trained cats, a professor of physics with a false nose and a red hat, and your correspondent.

Perhaps for the first time, the programme contained something close to a political message. "Remember," said the professor, "that however hard it is for you, it is even harder for your mother and father. Do all you can to help your correspondent."

"Of course we will," chorused the puppets in reply. Thus will Khrushka, Filya and Stepashka make their small contribution to social stability this winter.

By then feelings were running high in Trébeurden and the affair had been given a new twist with the arrest of Alain Guennec, the town's go-ahead mayor, on suspicion of financial misconduct connected with the project, which had always been very much his baby. He conceived the infant with enthusiastic support from the chamber of

United Nations: pressing priorities await moribund talking shop turned global force

El Salvador pact crowns De Cuellar's 10-year reign

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN NEW YORK

JAVIER Pérez de Cuellar signed off as head of the United Nations in triumph by brokering an accord that brings peace to El Salvador.

"I am a free man; I feel as light as a feather," the Peruvian said as he left the United Nations headquarters in the early hours of the new year at the end of a three-day negotiating marathon which forged a compromise between the government and rebel leaders of the Central American country. Just before midnight, ending Señor Pérez de Cuellar's ten-year tenure, President Cristiani and leaders of the left-wing Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front overcame final obstacles to a ceasefire in a civil war which has claimed nearly 80,000 lives.

The settlement capped a grand slam in peacemaking for the secretary-general, aged 71, whose stewardship saw the UN transformed from a moribund talking shop to a vigorous instrument of global diplomacy. Though the revival was catalysed by the collapse of East-West antagonism, Señor Pérez de Cuellar, a man of quiet persistence who once dreamed of becoming a concert pianist, has won high praise for seizing the opportunities opened by the historical change.

The El Salvador accord, to be formalised on January 16, crowned a string of successes which opened when the secretary-general won the confidence of Iran and promoted a settlement to the Iran-Iraq



Marathon man: Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the outgoing secretary-general, making a point in protracted peace talks in El Salvador

ed to the need to back a brutal, or "authoritarian" in the Reagan parlance, regime. Under American pressure, the Salvadorean military, built up to 50,000 men, did curb their death squads and excesses in the late 1980s.

Reform of the forces proved the main obstacle in periodic negotiations with the front. Emerging from the talks, Sufik Handal, the senior FMLN leader, said the accords "are going to transform the country. The army will be reformed, reduced and the

impunity of the military chiefs will be ended."

President Cristiani, an American-educated politician who had had to fight intense displeasure from the military and his own right-wing Arena party, welcomed the flexibility which he said the front had shown. Negotiations later this month will deal with dissolving their military structure and integrating them into civilian life, he said.

The peace accord draws on previously outlined schemes

Daunting challenges face Boutros Ghali

Michael Binyon,
Diplomatic Editor,
looks at the array of
tasks confronting the
new UN secretary
general in trouble spots
around the world

Boutros Ghali, formerly an Egyptian deputy prime minister, takes over as the United Nations secretary-general today at a time when the UN has never before commanded such international support or faced challenges in so many parts of the world.

From Cyprus to Somalia, Yugoslavia to Cambodia, the revitalised world body is playing a central role in brokering ceasefires, supervising the deployment of peacekeeping forces and organising humanitarian missions to feed, clothe and shelter the victims of war and famine.

Dr Boutros Ghali's most pressing priority is the dispatch of a 10,000-strong peacekeeping force to Yugoslavia. Cyrus Vance, the secretary-general's special envoy, yesterday announced that Serbia and Croatia have now accepted the UN peace plan.

On Tuesday the UN Security Council, in response to a German request, also asked UN envoys to investigate the feasibility of sending peacekeeping forces to guard a hydroelectric dam in Croatia, which Germany said the Yugoslav federal army was threatening to blow up.

Another peacekeeping mission is about to get under way in Cambodia, where the UN is supervising the power-sharing agreement signed in Paris in October.

The current deployment of 300 members of the UN advance mission will be augmented by 10,000 peacekeeping troops and administrators of the UN transitional authority in Cambodia, who are to monitor the ceasefire and disarm and demobilise the four warring groups.

The UN will also play a key role in humanitarian aid to settle returning refugees, provide emergency food rations and help clean minefields sown during 21 years of war.

duced a report which Polisario and several non-aligned countries said favoured Morocco, and the security council asked Dr Boutros Ghali to produce another.

The UN is also attempting to broker political solutions to two other long-running disputes: in Cyprus and in Afghanistan. Señor Pérez de Cuellar was personally engaged in trying to bring together the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, and Dr Boutros Ghali will need all his diplomatic skills and pressure to achieve this goal. The UN, meanwhile, has a standing peace force in Cyprus deployed along the line separating the two communities.

In Afghanistan, the UN, which brokered the Geneva accords that led to the withdrawal of Soviet forces, may now monitor the Soviet-American agreement to prevent new weapons reaching either side. It is also likely to be asked to help in the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of refugees who fled to Pakistan.

In the Middle East, Dr Boutros Ghali must supervise the enforcement of continuing UN sanctions on Iraq. UN envoys have negotiated with President Saddam Hussein on humanitarian questions since the end of the Gulf war, and UN forces are still in northern Iraq to protect the Kurds. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees said this week that it would leave the northern Kurdish region by April, having coordinated international relief operations in the area since June.

Direct UN engagement in the Arab-Israeli peace talks has been kept to a token presence. Continuing Israeli hostility means that the body is not likely to play a larger role for the foreseeable future.

Demobbed soldiers may turn to banditry

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PHNOM PENH

DIPLOMATS and United Nations officials in Cambodia fear that thousands of soldiers demobilised under the UN peace plan may turn to banditry because they cannot find jobs. Foreign envoys say the menace to order posed by the demobilised troops, who could number up to 200,000, is the most pressing problem facing Cambodia at a time when the peace process seems on course again.

Under the UN-sponsored accords signed in Paris on October 23, 70 per cent of the armies of the four warring factions, including the Khmer Rouge, are to hand in their arms and be demobilised. The rest will be based in UN-guarded cantonments. "Even if they are disarmed, weapons are easily obtained in Cambodia," said one diplomat who attended Monday's successful meeting of the Supreme National Council grouping all four factions. "The troops are very concerned about their future. The big worry is that they will turn to banditry."

Diplomats said the safe return to Phnom Penh of Kieu Samphan, the Khmer Rouge leader, on Monday — even if he did leave for Bangkok again after only 24 hours —

and the successful convening of the national council for the first time on Cambodian soil were reasons for guarded optimism. "All sides said the right things and seemed eager to push ahead with implementing the accords," said one diplomat who was present. "That signals to me that the momentum of the peace process has been gained after some serious difficulties."

Diplomats say that under the market economy introduced in 1989, thousands of Cambodians in the capital became prosperous in a war-fuelled economy. The troops who fought the war for a pittance will want to be given their share and will take it if they are not the diplomats' fear, so UN and bilateral assistance should be focused on finding something for the soldiers to do. Otherwise, instability could degenerate into anarchy.

Although this is only one of the problems facing the country, one of the world's poorest, after 21 years of war and political terror, Cambodians entered the new year with more hope than for two decades. The latest departure of Mr Kieu Samphan is not regarded as a setback now

Bombers attack school

FROM REUTER
IN JOHANNESBURG

SIX explosions rocked a South African school yesterday. They were apparently the work of right-wingers angered by plans to admit black pupils to previously all-white classes. The blasts in the eastern Transvaal town of Nelspruit caused no injuries, but damage was estimated at two million rand (£375,000), a police spokesman said.

No one has claimed responsibility for attacking the school, which is due to open to all races later this year. But right-wing extremists opposed to political reform are blamed for bombings linked to the start of talks between blacks and whites on a new constitution. Some whites have threatened to take up arms rather than submit to rule by a black-dominated government. Police say extremists are plotting to kill President de Klerk, the reformist president, and Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress.

Resistance to the ending of racial segregation has been strongest in rural towns like Nelspruit, where the prospect of multiracial schooling has caused widespread anger among whites. (Reuters)

Outback farmers flock to Canberra to baffle Bush

FROM ROBERT COCKBURN IN SYDNEY

A MORE tangible sign of the change in the world's priorities from military to economic concerns would be hard to imagine: where hundreds of peace demonstrators in kayaks and ferries once confronted American warships, only one boat yesterday pursued President and Mrs Bush as

they cruised around Sydney harbour. Outnumbered ten-to-one by police and secret service vessels, the tiny inflatable was swamped in the churning waters around Mr Bush's luxury cruiser.

A woman baled furiously with a plastic bottle to keep the little boat afloat. An elder-



Book token: Barbara Bush admiring a gift handed over by Melanie Calloway, aged nine, a patient in Sydney's Prince of Wales hospital

UK saw Peres as risk

Jerusalem: Shimon Peres, now Israel's opposition leader and regarded in London as a moderate, was seen by a British official in 1981 as a threat to Middle East stability (Richard Beeson writes).

Israeli newspapers have reported that the head of the Foreign Office's Middle East department wrote in July 1981: "Peres is a dangerous idiot who wants to frighten Arabs at any cost." Mr Peres, then deputy defence minister, had said the launching of the Shavit rocket was part of Israel's effort to develop surface-to-surface missiles.

David Ben Gurion, who was then prime minister, had earlier claimed the projectile was for meteorological research.

Border fence

Delhi: India plans to fence the entire length of its border with Pakistan with barbed wire. P.V. Narasimha Rao, the prime minister, was quoted as telling reporters in the desert district of Barmer. (AFP)

Plea to China

Hong Kong: Just one week after his release, Lau Shan-ching, who spent ten years as a political prisoner in China, led a mass rally through Hong Kong to call for the release of all Chinese political prisoners.

Peking failure

Peking: China, the world's last leading communist power, admitted that it had failed to resolve many problems facing its 1.1 billion people, and said it would speed up reform this year. The People's Daily reported. (AFP)

Hangings call

Baghdad: President Saddam Hussein's eldest son called for a return to public beheadings or hangings to crush a crime wave including car bombs. Uday Saddam Hussein made the call in his semi-official newspaper, *Babil*. (Reuters)

Doctors' fears

San Diego: Mother Teresa remained seriously ill in a California clinic, suffering from bacterial pneumonia and a heart complaint. Doctors were said to be hopeful, but "very concerned" about her. (Reuters)

Model crime

Elsloo, The Netherlands: A life-size model of Mikhail Gorbachev stolen from an Amsterdam wax museum the day after his resignation was found in a cafe here. (AFP)

Mongolian isolation deepens after big brother's demise

Despite economic hardship, Mongolia is rediscovering its long suppressed culture and religion. Patrick Newman reports from Ulan Bator

and the officially sponsored first Mongolian film festival was held last week in Peking.

To the west lies the newly independent republic of Kazakhstan, but as yet there are no formal diplomatic links with Alma Ata. Mongolia has an ambivalent attitude within its own borders, and cannot fail to be concerned by the nuclear arsenal on Kazakh territory.

But stirrings of Peking's interest in Mongolia are evident. A number of Chinese delegations are now being sent to Ulan Bator to offer joint venture deals on general terms.

In an unprecedented way, China is also courting Mongolia's cultural intelligentsia

eclectic brand of Buddhism, which is heavily influenced by prehistoric animist and shamanistic practices.

In a remote valley in the southern Gobi a fat and squat neolithic sculpture, which depended on imports from the Soviet Union, has since pre-Buddhist times been worshipped as the "eye had" (literally the "rocky mother"). The old valley was out of bounds under the communist rule, but within the past few months sacrifices have been made at the base of the figure. Her assistance is sought by many, including the senior executives of Mongol Television with whom I visited the site.

Orthodox Buddhism is also enjoying a revival after a bloody suppression which included the mass murder of more than 1,000 lamas in 1937. Kashok Bakula, the Indian ambassador to Mongolia, is himself one of the highest ranking lamas in the world. He maintains an "open door" policy to the devotees who besiege the embassy. In Mr Bakula's

avidly read pamphlets, he urges moderation and advocates Buddhism's "middle path" as a possible solution in Mongolia's search for a cultural future now that the Soviet Union no longer provides the enforced model.

There seems little danger at present of Mongolia's traditional culture being swamped. It is now undergoing a revival after decades of imposition of Russian culture. Mongols are now free to sing and listen to ballads lauding Genghis Khan, an imprisonable offence under the old regime. They are replacing the cyrillic alphabet with old Mongolian script.

Last week the Great People's Khural decreed that the alphabet will become mandatory in official documents from 1994. There are few Western visitors, and Western cultural influence is still muted.

Patrick Newman visited Mongolia on behalf of Yorkshire Television, where he is head of development.

Keating protest, page 30

The enigma and the Ecstasy

Users call them Love Doves and Disco Biscuits but, Thomson Prentice reports, there is growing evidence that a 'safe' designer drug can be a killer

The small white tablets were stamped with a dove of peace. Robert Parsonage, a Manchester teenager, paid £75 for five of them in a pub, but the real cost was his life. Within 24 hours he was dead, and the drug named Ecstasy had claimed another victim.

Ecstasy has many other names — Love Doves, Disco Biscuits, Denis the Menace, Rhapsody. In America, they call it the "hug drug", because it enhances the pleasure of physical contact.

The drug's combination of sexual stimulation, hallucinogenic effects and increased energy, giving a "high" lasting up to six hours, makes it a seemingly ideal accessory for thousands of teenagers who want to dance the night away at discos and acid house parties. As a bonus, it is not chemically addictive.

During the past few years, Ecstasy has become by far the most popular illicit drug in Britain. As many as half a million people, most of them teenagers and young adults, are believed to use it. During this week's new year parties, thousands of youngsters will have "dropped E" as casually as they would swing a pint of lager.

While its popularity is increasing, so, too, is evidence of the drug's potentially lethal properties. Last year about six deaths in Britain were attributed to Ecstasy, and hospitals are reporting about 40 emergency admissions a month, most of them teenagers, with serious side-effects.

Such cases are reported to the National Poisons Unit in London, a reference centre providing expert information to hospitals. John Henry, a consultant physician at the unit, says: "The number of cases involving Ecstasy is increasing. We find about twice as many reports in 1991 as in the year before, and although half a dozen deaths doesn't sound much among perhaps half a million

users, it is double the total of the previous three years."

Most of the deaths have involved massive internal bleeding because the drug can disrupt natural clotting processes. One girl was given 35 units of blood in 36 hours, but still died. A youth was given ten units in 14 hours. He, too, did not survive.

Doctors and researchers are also deeply concerned about the impact of Ecstasy on the brain. Some suspect it can cause long-term neurological damage as well as profound personality changes.

Last March, psychiatrists described in the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) two Ecstasy patients with chronic paranoid psychosis. One, a man aged 28, tried to strangle his wife. He suspected her of infidelity, spied on her, and forced her to make false confessions. In the other case, a man aged 22, became convinced that his face was being deformed.

"An association with psychosis is particularly worrying because of the considerable increase in the use of the drug and its image as a fairly safe recreational substance," the psychiatrists said in the BMJ.

The growing recognition of the physical and psychiatric damage that Ecstasy can cause is overshadowed by the lack of scientific knowledge about its effects. As an illicit drug, Ecstasy has never been through the same rigorous pharmacological investigations imposed on any legitimate drug.

"We don't know why a single tablet can kill one person, while many tablets have little or no effect on others," Dr Henry says. "We know nothing about the long-term effects."

A danger by any name? John Henry, of the National Poisons Unit, which advises doctors on the growing designer drug problem, examines a sample of Ecstasy

owed by the lack of scientific knowledge about its effects. As an illicit drug, Ecstasy has never been through the same rigorous pharmacological investigations imposed on any legitimate drug.

"We don't know why a single tablet can kill one person, while many tablets have little or no effect on others," Dr Henry says. "We know nothing about the long-term effects."

Last May, Robert Parsonage, aged 18, took time off from his A-level college studies to join 2,000 other youngsters at a party in a sports centre in Manchester. On the way he stopped at a pub and bought the tablets. A few hours later, he began hallucinating. He collapsed in a nearby car park, was admitted to hospital, and died in intensive care 12 hours later.

Other Ecstasy fatalities of the past two years include a 16-year-old girl who died after taking one tablet in a Manchester nightclub; a 21-year-old receptionist who died in hospital after 16 days in a coma; and despite a liver transplant; a trainee accountant who died on his 18th birthday; and a man of 20 who went into a fit and died on the way to hospital.

Chris Jones, a nurse teacher at

Sefton School of Health Studies, Fazakerley Hospital, Liverpool, has seen some of the casualties and is now compiling a research paper on Ecstasy-related hospital cases.

"These are just kids, they aren't junkies; they are just out for a good time, and they don't know what has hit them," he says.

"Ecstasy has this image of a safe, fun, designer drug, but it is killing teenagers. When they reach

hospital they are usually severely dehydrated, exhausted, with very high temperatures and rapid heartbeats. They have internal bleeding on such a scale that in some cases no amount of blood transfusions and clotting agents can stop it."

The number of known Ecstasy-related deaths may be few, but they are frighteningly indiscriminate.

"I don't know why the drug hits some people so hard and leaves the rest unscathed, but there is an urgent need for medical research," Mr Jones says.

Dr Henry agrees, and says the National Poisons Unit is setting up one such project. "With a prescribed drug, it is relatively easy to monitor adverse effects through the yellow-card system used by GPs. But there is no such system for an illicit drug like Ecstasy," he says.

"So an accurate picture of the real scale of side-effects, and their long-term consequences, is unobtainable. In the meantime, we have to conclude that it is potentially a very dangerous substance."

100 years from the laboratory to a fashion accessory

Despite its fashionable image as a "designer" drug, Ecstasy is almost 100 years old. It began life in a German pharmaceutical laboratory at the end of the last century, and was patented in 1914 as an appetite suppressant, but never marketed.

All its current nicknames are much easier to pronounce than its chemical title, "methylenedioxymethamphetamine, abbreviated to MDMA by doctors and chemists.

According to Marcus Rattray, a

biochemist at London University, and the author of a recent research paper on the drug, Ecstasy was first used in the 1970s as a tool in psychotherapy. Because of its mood-altering effects, it was seen as a way of breaking down barriers between psychiatrists and their patients. As one psychiatrist put it: "It invites self-disclosure and self-exploration."

From its medically-controlled uses, MDMA rapidly became popular as a recreational drug, first in America and then in

Britain, where it was banned in 1977 because of its hallucinogenic effects and its potential to be abused.

The drug's popularity surged in the mid-1980s with the advent of acid house parties — huge gatherings, often involving thousands of teenagers.

Ecstasy is mass-produced in underground laboratories, chiefly in Germany and The Netherlands, but police have raided at least one drug "factory" in London. Often the tablets are stamped with a dove, the emblem

of peace, giving rise to the "Love Doves" nickname.

Almost 240,000 tablets were seized by British police or Customs officers in the first six months of 1991.

Dr Rattray, writing in *Essays in Biochemistry*, says: "The popularity of MDMA can be ascribed to its psychotropic (mood-altering) effects. Users experience a five-to-six hour 'high' which produces increased activity, mood elevation, and alterations in perception.

"In most cases there do not appear to be any long-term consequences of MDMA abuse. For some individuals, MDMA can cause a severe acute reaction, including hypothermia, alterations in cardiovascular function, respiratory distress and intravascular coagulation, which may result in death."

Studies of laboratory rats suggest the drug damages neurones, or brain chemicals, influencing mood and behaviour, but whether it causes similar long-term neurological damage in humans is not yet known.

The heart of the matter

MOTHER Teresa, whose life has been devoted to the service of others, may this week have quite unwittingly done another service to another medically underprivileged group — the aged. Mother Teresa caught a cold and a cold while travelling in Mexico and, as is so often the case in older patients who are not immediately and vigorously treated, secondary bacterial infection gave rise to pneumonia.

In Mother Teresa's case, recovery was complicated by heart strain secondary to coronary arterial disease. But the Californian doctors did not shrug their shoulders mutter about her age, and prescribe "nursing care and fluids only", but arranged angioplasty, a procedure whereby the atherosclerotic (fatty) plaques are flattened against the coronary artery wall so that the blood can again reach the heart muscle which had previously been weakened by want of oxygen.

As the pneumonia is treated with the

MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttaford

antibiotics, breathing improves and the blood not only becomes better oxygenated but, now that the coronary arteries are cleared, is again able to course around Mother Teresa's heart muscle. California hospital authorities hope that Mother Teresa may be discharged within 14 days to continue her work but, being cautious, they warn that at her age — 81 — other complications might arise.

Writing in *Monitor*, the medical magazine, on advances in 1991, Dr Iain McIntosh has drawn attention to cardiologists' fears that there is an

ageist approach to cardiac surgery, so that patients who are old but otherwise well are being denied the procedures which would be routinely offered to younger patients suffering from the same conditions. He points out that improved surgical, and perhaps above all anaesthetic, techniques now enable elderly patients to be comparatively safely exposed to cardiac surgery.

Mother Teresa was fortunate. The angiogram, the X-ray studies of her coronary arteries, showed that the blocked vessels would be amenable to angioplasty and that bypass surgery would not be necessary. But in other patients of her age group, bypass surgery has been carried out — with good results.

Any elderly patient whose activities are being restricted by the pain of angina, or the tiredness which follows coronary heart disease, should remember Mother Teresa, and ask for a few investigations.



Drunk with power

DOWN the ages, doctors and laymen have noticed that alcohol and digestion do not mix, but those injudicious enough to combine them have recently taken comfort in the thought that if heartburn, gastritis or the ulcer play up, one of the H₂ blockers — Zantac, ranitidine or Tagamet, cimetidine — can come to the rescue.

But recent research, albeit involving a small number of patients, reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, suggests that both drugs may dramatically increase blood levels of alcohol after drinking. It is thought that these effects are due to an increased rate of absorption, but it should be remembered that both drugs can, fortunately rarely, cause liver damage. Until the question is settled, those who drink would be well-advised to rely on over-the-counter antacids, or possibly take the rival to the H₂ blockers, Losart (omeprazole).

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Just in time

Patriarch of a Gallic Europe

This is the second and final volume, excellently translated, of Jean Lacouture's masterly biography of de Gaulle. Foreign editor of *Le Monde* throughout most of these years, M. Lacouture threads his way colourfully as well as lucidly through a mass of documentary and other evidence. As a fervent, but not fanatical, admirer of de Gaulle, he writes fairly and critically of his hero; as when he describes the General's nervous collapse amid the student riots of May 1968, or when he "indefensibly" refused an invitation to meet Roosevelt after Yalta in February 1944, two months before the latter's death.

De Gaulle emerges from the book not merely as a remarkable character, but as a rare one. Half soldier, half bishop, a devotee of literature and the arts as well as a politician; profoundly democratic but often accused of Bonapartism; an orator who hated party politics; a believer in the lessons of history rather than in doctrine or philosophy.

The world for the General consisted not of ideologies but of nations. He shocked the Americans, Dulles especially, by treating the distinction between communism and non-communism as not all that important. He detested supranational bodies, and once described the Brussels Commission as a "group of clever and perhaps useful men, but not a Government". His inner conviction that he had received a sacred mission to save France, regardless of all obstacles, gave him immense determination and courage, but hardly made him a comfortable colleague.

Did the General himself possess any sense of humour? True, when Paul Reynaud had been voicing pro-British sentiments, he received a letter next day addressed in the General's hand-writing, with no contents, but a note on the back reading: "If absent, forward to Agincourt and Waterloo". But was even this comment made in anger?

That de Gaulle rescued the broken and tormented France of 1944, and in the end raised her to a stronger political and economic status than at any time in the Third

Douglas Jay, a member of Harold Wilson's cabinet, on de Gaulle's vision of Europe

or Fourth Republics, and that nobody else could have done it, there can be no doubt. But the tragedy of de Gaulle's life-long achievement was his quarrel with Franklin Roosevelt, which festered into a creeping anti-American feud that still disfigures Gaulism even today. It was Roosevelt's mistake, understandable but unnecessary, to undermine and indeed belittle de Gaulle throughout the war. Since de Gaulle normally classed all "Anglo-Saxons" as one human

DE GAULLE
The Ruler 1945-1970
by Jean Lacouture
Collins Harvill, £25.00

species, the Gaullist "animosity" tended to rub off on the British also. Was the General embittered by the Anglo-Saxon role in the liberation of France? Did Normandy rankle as much as Agincourt?

But the most tragic blunder of all was the fault of the British. One of de Gaulle's rare qualities was his ability to rise to rare levels of vision and magnanimity. He could and did praise the British with a lofty eloquence all his own. In February 1969, after saying "Non" to British membership of the EEC in 1963 and 1967, he invited the British ambassador, Christopher Soames, to lunch *à quatre* with their respective wives. De Gaulle then made a novel and far-reaching proposal. Anglo-French talks, he suggested, should be started towards a "European Europe" of nations; and he promised that "if the two Governments could solve their difference of view, he would agree to study a profound 'trans-

formation' of the Common Market with a view to making room for Britain". There would be a looser economic arrangement and a resulting political association in which France, Britain, Germany and Italy would play a major part. He wanted the British to propose this and he could then welcome it.

This could have been an epoch-making offer, which would, if realised, have given Britain almost everything it needed, and might well have ended the post-war Franco-British tension once and for all. Of course the talks might not have succeeded. But since with the support of the General and the British government they would have had a fair chance, the offer should have been followed up. Soames informed the Foreign Office at once, recommending acceptance. Instead, the FO blundered lamentably over what misleadingly became known as "the Soames affair". In this case the General understood real British interests far better than most people in London. Yet though he made the offer in strict confidence, the FO induced the prime minister, Harold Wilson, who was then in Bonn, to pass it on to the German Chancellor, and also issued published Soames's telegram before the British Cabinet knew anything about it. According to M. Lacouture, the FO even "distorted" the Soames report before publication. The General's reaction to the breach of confidence was fury. All chance of reconciliation was gone.

M. Lacouture's account of this offer by de Gaulle only reinforces my own judgement that it was the worst blunder of British policy since 1945 — perhaps this century. It inflamed the worst Gaullist suspicions about the good faith of the "Anglo-Saxons" and so hardened the Franco-German axis which is with us still. M. Lacouture is wrong. I suspect, in attributing the FO's conduct to deliberate cunning and "deep distrust" of de Gaulle. It was much more probably due to misunderstanding of the issues at stake and a curious temporary belief that the Treaty of Rome was a sacred text. But whatever the motives, the consequences were the same.



The general and the ambassador: de Gaulle fails to overshadow the late Christopher Soames

Fisher had an expressive, humorous face and a pleasant way of leg-pulling. He was capable of going round a party of 50 people and saying just the right thing to each individual. He was an amusing speaker after dinner or at school speech days. Even in the bad times for Germany after 1945 he could roll back round the country cheering everyone up. Until he started to talk too much in his old age he was an excellent chairman of a business meeting. The mind was penetrating and organised, he had taught Greek to sixth formers with an infectious zest, and despite Oxford firsts in classics and theology he had an uncomplicated faith and little theology in his composition. He could be kind and he was full of common sense and worked long hours.

But Fisher could also be hard. The hardness might lack compassion even on a triviality, and sometimes on a bigger subject like homosexuality in a boarding school, or how to treat intellectually enquiring but awkward colleagues, or whether Yalta was a just settlement. He was a pedant, not a scholar about which he ceased to care, but in getting the little

things right and tidy. This was wonderful at a coronation where he rehearsed till everyone was tired and the result was magnificent. It worked less well when others had their opinion and, being argumentative, he would persist long after it had begun to irritate the other side. He fought with the deans of St Paul's, Westminster Abbey and Canterbury, yet his three successors saw no need to do so. The worst moment in this book was when he did not give the sacrament to the kneeling Moderator of the Church of Scotland, not at all because he did not wish to, but because it was not part of the protocol. He insisted that bishops wear gaiters at private meetings of bishops. But this was pedantry, not pomp, for he was a man without pomposity. He did not want to be grand, he wanted everything to be correct.

Ramsay Macdonald, taking the advice of William Temple, recommended him to the King to be bishop of Chester; he had shot his bolt as headmaster of Repton and

Owen Chadwick
ARCHBISHOP FISHER
His Life and Times
by Edward Carpenter
The Canterbury Press Norwich, £35

Temple cared for the good of the school. Woolly old Bishop Winnington-Ingram claimed to have caused the choice of Fisher for the diocese of London, but that is impossible to credit. He may have caused it indirectly because he left the diocese of London in a mess and Fisher had a record for clearing up messes. He thought of himself as an amateur, he believed that he was not a man of ideas and that his sermons were pedestrian. On education Fisher was no amateur and even though he had nothing like a charisma, if the subject was practical he could rise to a height of coherent oratory. Most people thought of him as a man without emotions. In this remarkable book, which does not omit the warts, we find him weeping three times twice when he heard that he must be bishop of London, a fate which he

thought horrible, and once when he went as pilgrim to the Holy Land and, after being swept by a crowd up the road to the crucifixion, he wandered in Galilee.

Churchill, who does not come well out of this book, recommended him to be archbishop during a world war, because he interviewed him and thought him tough. If it is desirable that the Archbishop of Canterbury be an administrator, then this choice was the best: he was good at budgets; and if ever there was a time when those qualities were needed, it was in the age of reconstruction after the Second World War. His judgement on wider issues was less sure than his judgement on detail. He committed his Church, and unthinkingly stretches of his own time, to an exhausting effort to revise the canon law, last revised in 1604. He

never forgave his denouncing of premium bonds as squallid and felt even angrier about his son of "You've never had it so good". So Fisher was no respecter of persons. Church and State sometimes had a rough time. He interfered outrageously in the policy of the British government towards terrorism in Cyprus and the person in this book for whom the reader feels most sympathy is the colonial secretary, Lennox-Boyd. His view of his office was so high that he offered to mediate between Macmillan and Archbishop Makarios.

Some people disliked him. They wanted an archbishop who thought about God, like his predecessor Temple, or one with a depth of prayer, like his successor Ramsey. They resented his image as an able bureaucrat and a compulsive writer of letters. But unless a person got across him it was hard to dislike him, so jolly and beaming and exuberant and unpretentious was his personality, so comical his eyebrows and his spectacles pushed up into the non-existent hair. His staff liked him and admired him. People who sat under Temple's chairmanship, or Ramsey's non-chairmanship, signed for Fisher.

But Ransom's most moving poems are about death, death in a homey and familial context, the death of children. "Dead Boy" mourns truthfully an unlikeable cousin (*A pig with a pasty face, so I had said!*). "Bells for John Whitemore's Daughter" is breathtakingly lovely in its evocation of how a young girl's geese might grieve for her.

The lazy geese, like a snow cloud Dripping their snow on the green grass.

Tricking and stopping, sleepy and proud Who cried in goose, Alas . . .

This is dangerous ground, one beset with possible sentimentality. Ransom traverses it both by his skill as a prosodist and by a scrupulousness of feeling which that skill reflects. He is also a preeminent love poet:

Two evils, monstrous either one apart, Possessed me, and were long and loath at going.

A cry of Absence, Absence, in the heart,

And in the wood the furious winter blowing.

This book should be in the library of any young poet, or any reader, young or old, who cares for poetry at all. They may treasure the four years of his inspiration, and learn from the appendix of "pairings" of original and revised versions something of the mystery of what makes and can unmake a poet.

take over — like those which reflect a continent at war and the politics of military preparation.

General Wraith, who has right-wing political aspirations to the White House, is based on General Douglas MacArthur. He even tells reporters on *Adelaide* station after being evacuated from the Philippines: "The enemy saw me retreat. But they shall soon see me return" — evoking memories of MacArthur's famous pledge. Sandforth plays Brutus to this 20th-century Caesar, for the most part deeply loyal but, in the end, flawed.

The subject manner is powerful enough and the canvas sufficiently broad to merit more serious treatment than it gets. The way in which Galt Sandforth, so reliable, cool-headed, imperious Wraith's and his own soaring ambitions for the sake of his innocent young Sheila, has potential which has not been fully exploited.

Despite the intrigue in Washington and the Pacific (some of which makes fighting the Japanese seem like child's play), the self-questioning by Dim — more aimed against than similing, the intrusion of a young rival in the love-sick general — Coyle's explorations of feeling are superficial and his definitions of character at best blurred. Few of the dramatic personae hold one's attention, and the love story rarely rises above the level of an illicit romance.

Chief of Staff is one of Keneally/Coyle's "commercial" works and as such will no doubt pay his/her air fares for a while. But I feel that it could have been much more than that: and I found myself wishing while reading it, that it was.

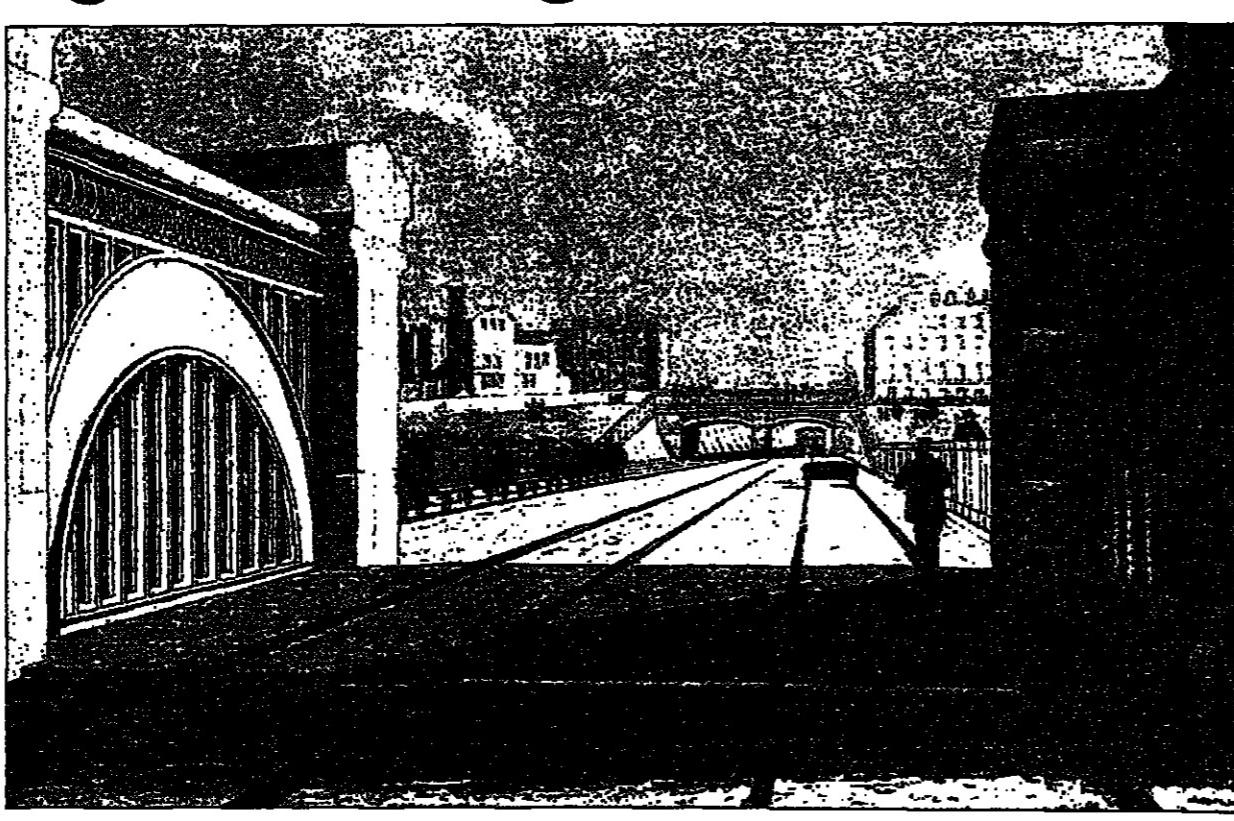
From gibbets to gentrification

Gillian Tindall

CAMDEN TOWN AND PRIMROSE HILL PAST
by John Richardson
Historical Publications, £12.95

Held up in a bus the other week behind Camden's demonstrating social workers, I wondered what the founders would have thought of it all. The operations of time and chance have finally extended his name over an entire contentious London borough, and made it a short-hand term for much more. But it is a mere 200 years this year since Charles Pratt, first earl of Camden, bestowed it on a rather downmarket property development of his on a muddy site south of venerable Kentish Town, near a road junction hitherto associated with two pubs, a workhouse and a gibbet.

Camden Town was never a village and only briefly was it a suburb. Within 50 years the cottage gardens full of cabbages and snails and chicken coops that Dickens remembered from his boyhood there were being swept away by the railway lines heading into the new main stations on the Euston Road. Even without the trains, the area had already by then been overtaken by London's relentless expansion. For the next 100 years or so Camden Town became that peculiarly English phenomenon — an area of fog and trains



virtually invisible to the middle classes passing through it on their way to more salubrious suburbs, yet one full of life. Camden has sheltered personalities as various as Engels, Sickert and Dylan Thomas, as well as countless Italians, Greeks, Cypriots and Irish families founding homes from abroad. It has trembled from bombs, demolitions and the threat of a motorway, yet it has also been a heartland of passionate gentrification. Life and Times in NW1. It is twentieth century London in microcosm, and today seething Camden Lock, complete with a new iron structure like an ideal industrial relic, is a touristic name at the other end of the world. Poor Lord Camden. Lucky Lord Camden.

Lucky John Richardson, too, to have such a fertile subject for another in his illustrated Historical Publications series on London districts. The black-and-white of the old photos, prints, plans and trade advertisements that he employs is ideally suited to Camden Town's personality. And lucky Camden Town to have had such a meticulous and well informed chronicler. He has also found for the dust jacket an Ackerman print of the 1830s which is both little known and appropriate. On a handsome iron bridge over the canal, somewhere to the north of King's Cross, with the shadow dome of St Paul's in the distance, a pristine train of open trucks heads away into a shining industrial future.

Drums for a false beard

Henry Stanhope

CHIEF OF STAFF
by William Coyle
Chatto & Windus, £14.99

In this case the hapless male is Lieutenant-General Galt (Galt) Sandforth, chief of staff to General "Big Drum" Wraith, US commander in the south Pacific in the second world war. His weakness down under is Private Dimity (Dim) Lewis, a clerk in the Allied Officers' Club in Melbourne and daughter of an up-country sheep grazier.

The tempered and his temptress are both married, yet only just. Galt's wife Sandy, accustomed to long periods of separation, has carved out her own lifestyle in Virginia. Dim's husband Allan, an Australian special forces hero, is inexplicably cursed by sexual impotence.

Bewitched on his first encounter with young Dim — whose age approximates to that of his own daughters — Galt succumbs from the casting couch down a long trail of indiscretions. He engineers her promotion to lieutenant, makes her entertainment officer on the staff and, as such, an indispensable item on his inventory. She even travels to the waterfront in New Guinea — the delight of his enemies and distress of his friends. Now read on...

This perhaps is the moment to explain that William Coyle is an alias of the renowned Thomas Keneally, winner of

CINEMA: NEW RELEASES

Strong meat, deliciously funny

In hiding in an abattoir bin, but in vain: an anonymous early victim of the butchery attempts to avoid death in the "wonderfully bizarre" new film comedy, *Delicatessen*

Geoff Brown on the French black comedy *Delicatessen*, plus V.I. Warshawski and Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey

Start the year with some thing isty. Rush to *Delicatessen* (15, Canon, Tottenham Court Road, Metro, Screen on the Hill): a wonderfully bizarre, black-humoured French concoction that titillates the plate no end. Its makers, Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro (interviewed by Stephanie Billen, right), pursue the sleek, surreal style common to many new recruits from the fleshpots of advertising air-video. But where Luc Besson, Jan-Jacques Beineix and others were their visual fancies on wispy plot, the *Delicatessen* boys construe a tight narrative edifice of sequences, gags, circus tricks, theme and variations. One viewing of *Delicatessen* or *Berry Blue*, and the film is exhausted; after several screenings of the cannibalistic comedy, nuances still await the connoisseur.

Action unfolds within a butcher's shop surrounded by lodgings, stranded in a misty, blizzarded landscape, howling in time between the second world war and some devastated future where meat is scarce and grain is replaced by coagulation. To maintain sicks, the butcher views as fair gammon lodger found on the stairs afterdark. Louison, an ex-circus performer and a wizard on the muscaweb, is his main target, even though Louison wins the heart of Julie, a short-sighted, cello-playing daughter. At the end of the revels, Trojodys — vegetarian revolutionaries camped in the sewers — raid the premises, and the water that rips throughout gathers force to become a flood, demolishing most of them.

'After several screenings of this cannibalistic comedy, nuances still await the connoisseur'

You could play "Spot the Influence" until next Christmas. Terry Gilliam rubs shoulders with the Carné-Poerret classics of the Thirties and Forties (street scenes and rooftop vistas pay obvious homage to Alexandre Trauner's sets). French comic strips fuel the aggressive black humour and stylisation; while surreal gags point to Jacques Tati. Yet Jeunet and Caro's magpie minds fuse the pickings into a movie deliciously fresh and individual.

Each flat in the building prompts its own mad scene: two brothers manufacturing little bodies that float in a basement room swamped with frogs and snails; Rube Goldberg-style bell-push, sewing machine, electric lamp and a would-be victim waiting in the bath. But the joy of the film lies in the details binding characters together. Squeaking bed-springs in the butcher's boudoir trigger off in other rooms a cosmic symphony of carpet-beating, tyre pumping and rhythmic strokes of paintbrush and cello bow. Gags are shaped like Louison's boomerang knife: they keep bouncing back, victoriously, in later scenes.

In the directorial division of labours, Caro took care of the golden-hued visuals, while Jeunet controlled the actors. They assembled a marvellous line-up of gar-

goyles: rubber-faced Dominique Pinon (the most familiar player) as Louison; wide-eyed Marie-Laure Doumagas as the daughter, a pool of innocence in the madhouse; Jean-Claude Dreyfus as the horrid butcher; sultry Karin Viard as his mistress. None of these become three-dimensional characters — the boy script hardly leaves room — but they make delightful puppets.

Imperfections ultimately intrude. The Trojodys' rebellion allows Jeunet and Caro to spin out their film to feature length but ruptures the hermetic spell. The best moments of *Delicatessen* are quiet

treated to Turner's trade-mark croak rattling off the hard-boiled cracks in several adventures. But it is hard to imagine any movie audience queuing for more of this low-grade thriller, hardly different from the bread-and-butter product regularly served on the small screen. The problem lies not with Sara Paretsky: her salty feminist heroine seems ready-made for breathing fresh air into a genre susceptible to clichés.

Now can we fault Kathleen Turner, who deserves a small medal for gusto. She gets hurled from a car and thumped in the face; she escapes in a speed boat, boards a ship by clambering up a rope and floors opponents with martial kicks. She continuously displays what radio audiences must imagine: those legs. But when the script is dim-

witted and the direction mundane, what can a poor girl do? Warshawski's case involves a suspicious dockside explosion, a shipping company of sagging fortunes and a 13-year-old daughter who hires V.I. — Vic to her friends — to nail her father's killer.

To suck the life from this plot (first aired in Paretsky's *Indemnity Only*) took the brains of three writers. Any spare creative juice was probably used up spinning puns about "dicks". Supporting characters such as Charles Durning's police lieutenant

ant weave in and out, awaiting the spotlight that other episodes would supposedly throw. Jeff Kanew's direction is perfunctory.

Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure — the daff tale of two woolly-headed, time-travelling Californian teenagers — made passable entertainment in 1990. **Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey** (PG, Odeon, West End) stretches the joke too far. To gauge the film's excess, just count the characters. First come Bill and Ted, played as before by Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter. Then two evil Bill and Ted replicants spread confusion, sent from the future by nasty Joss Ackland to derail history.

For a reel or two, Bill and Ted become ghosts and visit the afterlife, where they pick up the Grim Reaper as sidekick and feed ("Hey, how's it hangin', Death?") asks Ted. For the cake's icing, two Martian scientists built on the lines of a Maurice Sendak wild thing construct robots of Bill and Ted.

With four sets of Bill and Ted wandering, colliding and dishing out sh*t ("Woh!" and "Hey!"), hands strumming an imaginary guitar, the audience's patience is quickly exhausted. Chintzy special effects prove a further burden. William Sadler's Grim Reaper manages some laughs, dressed in a cow, with a scythe and Swedish accent. British director Pete Hewitt — hired on the basis of his National Film and Television School graduation piece *The Candy Store* — can only shovel the material onto the screen and hope for the best. It is not forthcoming.

CINEMA: INTERVIEW

Food shop boys enjoying a hit

The two young co-directors of the film *Delicatessen* (reviewed, left), talk to Stephanie Billen

Cinema meets the circus in *Delicatessen*, the bizarre Gallic comedy by directors Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro. A cult hit in France and recipient of the European Film Award for Best Production Design, *Delicatessen* takes a circus clown and places him in the middle of an ugly world of ration-books, decaying tenement rooms and semi-discreet cannibalism.

"At the beginning the character was a music-hall sort of figure," explains Jeunet. "Then Marc had the idea of the clown. Lots of little things we had been thinking about suddenly became justified — like his big shoes and the way he hangs from his braces when he's painting the ceiling. That was normal for him."

In fact *Delicatessen* has confused the French press. Searching for inspirations for the film, critics have come up with sources too specific to ignore, but too many and varied within any short analysis of the picture. Jeunet and Caro lent a hand themselves in one newspaper, providing a list of influences from *Tintin* to Terry Gilliam, from Robert Doisneau's photography to Tex Avery's cartoons.

In conversation they cite the films of Marcel Carné in particular. "We loved pictures like *Hôtel du Nord* and *Le Jour se lève*. The challenge was to transfer these films we were used to seeing in black and white into colour," says Caro.

But Caro, who is credited with the zany look of the film (Jeunet directed the actors), prefers not to analyse its visual humour. Instead he says simply: "If you are sure that something makes you laugh, then you can be sure it will make someone else laugh; what you can't tell is how many will laugh."

Sweetly old-fashioned and romantic as the picture is at times, that is not its overall effect. Jeunet and Caro, who previously worked together on short films and advertisements, playfully describe their first feature as "rough and meaty". Critics have compared the spectacle to a very different style of circus, one that features motorbikes and chainsaws: Archais.

Archais. Audren Le Boulluec, a member of that circus, can see the similarities. "When I first saw *Delicatessen* I could see Archais in the film's atmosphere, in the characters' faces, their crazy eyes and the fact that we never know what time we are in, whether it is the past or the future... Then there is all the water and smoke, which is also like our shows."

For the moment, however, that is not a worry. *Delicatessen* has found its audience and Jeunet and Caro are enjoying their new-found success. In between ribbing each other with a running joke about the prospect of fame and a Cadillac, they elaborate on a so-far non-existent sequel:

In *Delicatessen II*, "Louison is beating his wife, and they have ten children," says Jeunet. "And she's hugely pregnant," adds Caro, mock seriously. "The first shot is her, with this huge black eye, scrubbing the kitchen floor... It's very important for humanity to be shown this, how hard it is to wash floors, especially without any hot water."



Directorial team: Jean-Pierre Jeunet (left) and Marc Caro

A Lotte worse?

IF HOLLYWOOD were preparing a biographical musical about Kun Weil's wife, the songbird Lotte Lenja — and Hollywood is — who would you fear most in the principal role? You guessed correctly: Bette Midler. The doughty lady, who sings and dances through three wars in her latest film *For the Boys*, is expected to star in the TriStar production. No word yet on casting of Weil himself, though one wag has suggested John Travolta for the part

ARTS REVIEWS
New Year celebrations, Rock and Dance page 16

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"A wretched building", at present "in a terrible state": the Lyceum Theatre, in Wellington Street, London

Somewhere to rest their feet

Can London's Lyceum Theatre return to life as a showcase for Britain's top dance companies? Simon Tait reports

Tacked on to the latest list of 129 beneficiaries of the football pools companies' Foundation for Sport and the Arts is an allocation of £65,000 to the steering group of the Lyceum Theatre Trust for a feasibility study. That modest handout, which looks rather like an afterthought, could be the answer to the prayer of dancers, dance administrators, conservationists and theatre historians.

Arts Projects Consultants have been commissioned to assess whether the near derelict Lyceum, just off The Strand, could become London's national dance house. With its wide stage and potential seating capacity of more than 2,000, the theatre has been frequently held up as ideal for dance. Preliminary assessments suggest it would cost £25 million to buy the building, and to restore and equip it properly, including the reinstatement of the stage, the orchestra pit and the stalls.

The hope of the steering committee, chaired by Lady Harlech, chairman of English National Ballet, is that the Lyceum would be the London home for ENB, London Contemporary Dance Theatre, London City Ballet, Rambert Dance Company, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Northern Dance Theatre, and even the Royal Ballet.

There have been other schemes for the Lyceum, such as the one to dismantle the gorgeous Edwardian interior and reassemble it underground with an office block from ground level upwards. The Royal Opera House even had discussions with the

leaseholder, Brent Walker, about shifting opera and ballet performances to a refurbished Lyceum during Covent Garden's three-year closure, but they came to nothing.

Now, Lord Palumbo, chairman of the Arts Council, believes he has found the answer to save the Lyceum: the European Arts Festival, the six-month celebration of British artistic achievement being staged to mark Britain's presidency of the European Community. Already

the government has committed £5 million to the festival, which runs from July to December. Palumbo plans to see David Mellor, chief secretary to the Treasury, in hope of persuading him to give government money to the Lyceum scheme.

The Lyceum is the obvious choice," says Palumbo. "It would be a wonderful and significant gesture on the part of the government to resolve a matter which has been intractable for too long. What could be more joyful, more appropriate, than to have it open by the beginning of the Year of Dance in 1993?"

The theatre was not the obvious choice eight years ago when John Drummond, former Radio 3 controller, directed

"A wide stage and capacity of more than 2,000 seem to make it ideal for dance"

freeholder, the Theatres Trust, is getting increasingly impatient with Brent Walker, who bought the lease — with a clause requiring restoration to production theatre standard — for just over £8 million in 1988. The financially-troubled company is technically in breach of the lease now. Some of those who made rival bids then, including Stoll Moss and Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group, are still said to be keen to buy.

The search for a London

dance house has been going on for 15 years. Plans to build a theatre next to Sadler's Wells, birthplace of the Royal Ballet, have been hamstrung by the slump in the development market, which would have paid for it: the £60 million proposal to build the London Dance House in Waterloo is in a similar state of limbo. Although work has started around the ROH on shifting shops and dressing rooms, the major part of the £200 million development is having to wait until after the recession.

Private money will be needed for the Lyceum scheme, but a government commitment of funds has a way of attracting more money from the City. Palumbo's idea is to make the scheme the centre of the European festival. But is getting the Lyceum open within the six months of the festival a realistic or even desirable option? Iain Mackintosh, a theatre historian and designer who is now working on turning Edinburgh's Empire Theatre into an opera house, got the Lyceum open for the National Theatre's *Mysteries* in 1985. They needed a flat space, and the Lyceum provided it because it had lost its stage and front stalls. "It would take two to three years to get it ready for opening for dance," Mackintosh says.

"Apart from the physical work, there are complex listing building consents and planning procedures. The building is in a terrible state and cannot be got ready overnight, but it is a wonderful building and has to be restored."

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Stephanie Billen
in 1992

No need to man the barricades

Jonathan Clark says attacks on our constitution are a more potent threat to order than riots or demonstrations

Could revolution happen here? Such things seem scarcely within the bounds of Britishness. Yet little more than a decade ago, the nation's alleged ungovernability was producing genuine forebodings in the minds of experienced observers. Writing in *The Times* in August 1977, Lord Chalfont warned that a "great and ominous change is taking place in the affairs of this country," and sounded the alarm against overturning the "delicate balance between freedom and order in society".

He wrote in the immediate aftermath of the Grunwick picket, a National Front march and a violent by-election; his concern was to stress how "political minorities in Britain are becoming more and more arrogant and contemptuous in their readiness to advocate and use violence against anyone who dissents from their views".

That form of threat to the rule of law was seen off by the government of the 1980s, and is unlikely to recur. Yet events since 1989 in Eastern Europe and finally in the Soviet Union itself have emphasised how vulnerable to destabilisation even the most seemingly secure states can be.

Since 1989, revolutions have changed their spots. Historians and political scientists used to explain them chiefly as the result of "pressure from without": regimes were toppled by militant minorities of the excluded or oppressed, organised around one or other programmatic ideology. Jacobins, Nazis



Chalfont: fears of civil breakdown

and Bolsheviks were the archetypal cases. Since 1989, those analysts have started to emphasise another element in the picture: revolutions often, perhaps usually, occur when governments suffer internal collapse. So it was, for example, with the outbreak of the English civil war, and the Glorious Revolution of 1688 has been explained in a similar way.

In the 1990s, a hung parliament, proportional representation, capitulation to the European Community, federalism and the breakup of the United Kingdom, a protection-driven world stamp consequent on French sabotage of the Gatt negotiations could all, singly or in combination, be a better route to ungovernability than any minority of activists has been able to devise in 20th-century Britain.

Historians have described the preconditions of revolution. Those advanced by the Marxist Eric Hobsbawm apply particularly now. First, he argued, "A deterioration of the condition of life for the masses" was not in itself enough to produce a revolutionary situation: it must be combined with "a crisis in the affairs of the ruling order, and a body of revolutionaries capable of directing and leading the movement". For Britain in the 1990s, read: recession is not sufficient; schism within the

The author is a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

Nigel Hawkes asks why trials of a promising breast cancer drug have been delayed

Tomorrow the Imperial Cancer Research Fund is due to announce the results of the largest study ever undertaken of treatments for breast cancer, a disease which in Britain kills some 16,000 women a year. The results are expected to be very encouraging, showing that the best treatments, if made universally available, are capable of saving 1,000 women a year in Britain and perhaps 10,000 worldwide.

Second, Eric Hobsbawm suggested that revolutions have been and can be averted by quietist religion, diverting temporal dissatisfaction into otherworldly channels. In the 1990s, we might argue that both communism and liberal constitutionalism act as secular religions, but with the death of these gods widely reported, the rising tides of nationalism and material ambition find fewer and fewer obstacles in their paths.

Third, he argued that revolutionary pressures can be defused, as in Britain in 1832, by prudent concessions from the parliamentary classes. A parliament in the 1990s which resisted EC federalism, monetary union and regional devolution with enough resolution to defeat them might risk greater destabilisation, whereas piecemeal concession might buy peace through surrender.

Fourth, Hobsbawm suggested that revolutionary situations could be turned into real revolutions by alliances between proletariat and bourgeoisie or an intellectual élite. Translated into British terms, that points an accusing finger at organisations like Charter 88: its charge that our constitution is irredeemably corrupt reverts to a strategy historically more potent than this century's class-war theories have ever been.

Charter 88, the Liberal Democrats, the Institute

for Public Policy Research and Liberty (successor to the National Council for Civil Liberties) have all, in their constitutional proposals, expressed the same ahistorical understanding of what the constitution is and what it can be made to do.

On the continent, regimes have usually found themselves internally destabilised, like the Soviet Union, when their publicly professed ideologies are declared intellectually bankrupt. Whether liberal constitutionalism, the unifying principle of the United Kingdom in modern times, has been dealt a similar blow by the EC and federalism is a question of that academic interest.

Just as generals seek to refight previous wars, so revolutionaries yearn for revolution on an old model – and with as little success.

Destabilisation of Britain, if it were to come, would not resemble the 1970s, with its mob disorder, barricades, politicised strikes and martyrdoms. It would not be a Marxist "crisis of capitalism", nor a populist, East European style resurgence of English nationalism: a shipwright is unlikely to become head of state. Destabilisation would take new forms, but would be no less real for that.

The author is a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

Biographies of him are sprouting in every cabbage patch, although even the speediest chronicler of the events risks being far behind by new accretions of astonishment. But there is a terrible possibility that when the biographies are all finished, the novelist will swarm in.

It is almost inevitable. Would you, however much of a rogue you thought him, have believed what we now know and what we are still discovering? By that I don't mean that we would have been unable to think him so crooked. I mean that if we had been told that his depredations were greater and more widespread than any predecessor in all the history of corporate swindling, we could not have imagined such tricks as putting up one lot of shares as collateral for two separate lenders while selling the same shares to a third buyer; nor could we have guessed at the theft of the pension fund, nor the removal of a gigantic sum to his own office safe when the sum in question was owed to creditors, nor the juggling between private and public companies, nor even the scores (some say it was hundreds) of writs for libel, nor – but the point is that we are looking at a window when we thought it must be a mirror, by which I mean that it is not the extent of his thieving that is so astounding, but our

inability to stretch our imaginations far enough to comprehend it.

At which point, of course, the professional imaginers are called in. Within two years, perhaps sooner, there will be no fewer than six novels, all very bad, about a crooked television tycoon. The idea will be to astonish the reader by the brilliant and original notion of making the villain not a newspaper proprietor but a rogue in a similar industry. Further masterstrokes of the same kind of imagination will have the central character very thin, born in Japan and notoriously anti-Semitic. But the books will still be no good.

Why? It is not immediately easy to say. The facile answer is that because he was so crooked, and in so many ways, it is impossible to paint such a figure brightly enough to make him convincing.

able to all. The long-term answer, however, must be prevention rather than treatment. There is growing evidence that tamoxifen can prevent the disease among susceptible women.

The proposal now is to try to demonstrate this effect in a large trial. Some 15,000 women would be recruited from high-risk groups: those with a family history of breast cancer. Half would be given the drug, the other half a placebo, and their progress would be monitored over ten years. If the optimism of those promoting the trial proves justified, breast cancer in the group receiving tamoxifen might be halved.

Is it justifiable to treat healthy women with a powerful drug in the hope of demonstrating a protective effect? If the trial proves successful, then millions rather than thousands might be treated. Before going down that road we must be sure that any side-effects are well understood.

Doctors involved in the trial

have never attempted to dodge this issue, but they are beginning to lose patience with the small-like place at which the medical establishment has dealt with it. The cancer charities are satisfied, but the Department of Health and the MRC are still moving cautiously.

After promising a public hearing, the MRC got cold feet and set up a private committee, under Dame Mary Donaldson. The committee held one meeting and satisfied itself that the trial should go ahead, subject to the proviso that it should include only women already aware that they are at greater than average risk of breast cancer. This eliminated the danger that the doctors involved would tour the country pressing reluctant women into the trials. This was, of course, a purely theoretical danger, for there are already all-too-many women fully aware of the risk.

The Department of Health, for its part, ordered the Committee on Safety of Medicines to take another look at the drug's safety. This request came very late, after tamoxifen had already been widely used in preliminary trials. The evidence on safety is good, the only question mark coming from Sweden, where an increased risk of cancer of the lining of the uterus was found. The effect has not been reproduced in the British trials.

The MRC has now weighed in again with the demand that the health economics of the trial should be examined. To the doctors involved this is an extraordinary request, which would make sense only if tamoxifen were a hugely expensive treatment. It is not the cost of making it generally available would be no greater than that of childhood inoculation against polio.

For the public, the least satisfactory part of the affair is that it has all taken place behind closed doors. When asked if it will publish Dame Mary Donaldson's report, the MRC equivocates. The promised public debate on the

subject has been delayed on the grounds that the MRC wanted first to "tease out the issues", medical-speak for selling the question internally before the public has a chance to get involved.

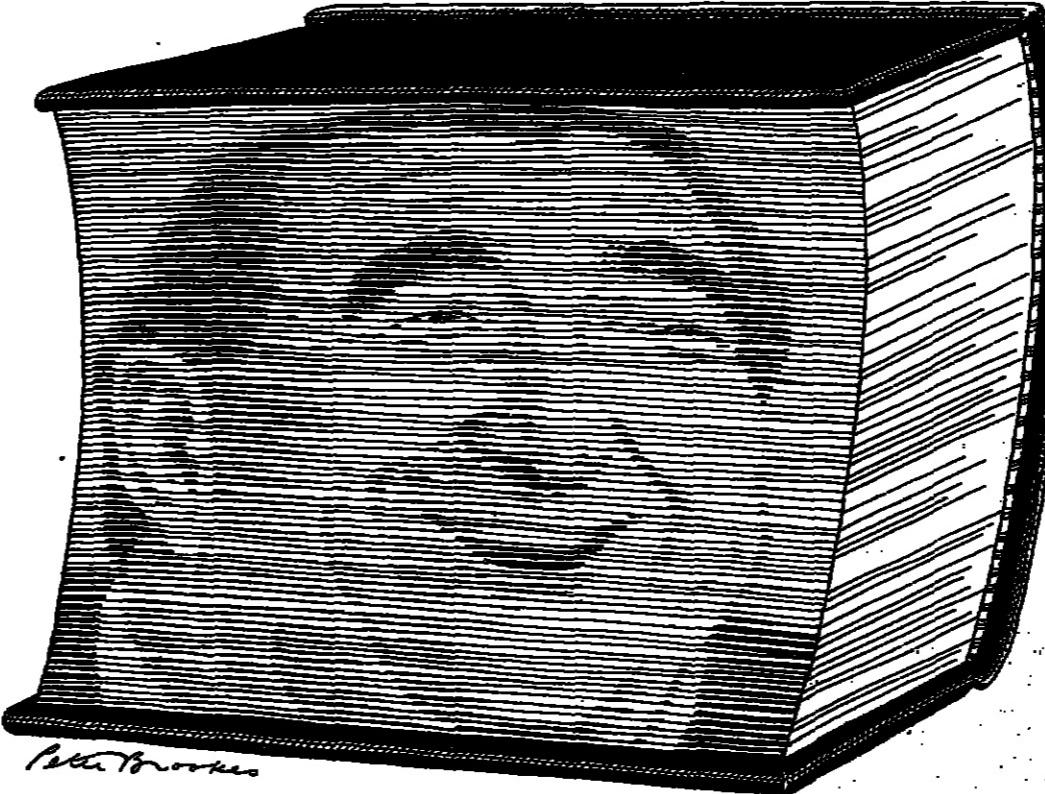
Meanwhile, the doors concerned at the Royal Marsden and Guy's Hospital are bemoaning to lose heart. For four years at least they have been preparing openly for the trial, only to be thwarted at the last minute by the medical bureaucrats. While Britain has equivocated, America has gone ahead, with approval of a trial there from the usually cautious Food and Drug Administration.

There may be good reasons for delay, but if so neither the MRC nor the Department of Health has demonstrated them. Given that more women die of breast cancer in Britain than in any other country, and that, unlike other cancers, the survival rate has hardly improved over the past 50 years, there is no excuse for temporising. Either the trial should be approved, or proper reasons should be given or refusing it. At present, the impression is one of muddle and indecision, while more than 300 women a week continue to die.

Time to save lives

A life stranger than fiction

Bernard Levin fears that no novelist could do justice to the scale of Robert Maxwell's swindling and treachery



Patricia Brooks

You didn't think that the Marwell story would go without a comment from me, did you? I come late to it with some confidence that I shall not be greeted by groans from one end of the country to the other, for I cannot remember any other story running daily for so long, remaining on the front pages throughout, with us never ceasing to record it and you never getting too bored to read it.

I met him on a few public occasions, chatting for a few minutes; he was always affable towards me, possibly because I had nothing that he wanted, and of course I never for a moment thought that he was in any way honest. When I heard of his death, I had no doubt that it was suicide, and I remain of that opinion, though I did wonder whether there was a luxuriously appointed submarine nearby.

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By that I don't mean that we would have been unable to think him so crooked. I mean that if we had been told that his depredations were greater and more widespread than any predecessor in all the history of corporate swindling, we could not have imagined such tricks as putting up one lot of shares as collateral for two separate lenders while selling the same shares to a third buyer; nor could we have guessed at the theft of the pension fund, nor the removal of a gigantic sum to his own office safe when the sum in question was owed to creditors, nor the juggling between private and public companies, nor even the scores (some say it was hundreds) of writs for libel, nor – but the point is that we are looking at a window when we thought it must be a mirror, by which I mean that it is not the extent of his thieving that is so astounding, but our

inability to stretch our imaginations far enough to comprehend it. At which point, of course, the professional imaginers are called in. Within two years, perhaps sooner, there will be no fewer than six novels, all very bad, about a crooked television tycoon. The idea will be to astonish the reader by the brilliant and original notion of making the villain not a newspaper proprietor but a rogue in a similar industry. Further masterstrokes of the same kind of imagination will have the central character very thin, born in Japan and notoriously anti-Semitic. But the books will still be no good.

One of the very few sensible things I have ever done in my life was not to try to be a novelist. (Well, I did try, starting with short stories, but I have described elsewhere my ignominious failure to get anything published.) My fundamental handicap would always be my lack of the fiction writer's imagination: if I had set out to

construct a Maxwell lookalike, the very best I could have managed would have been to follow every step of the real figure, so that my readers would on one page find an astounding tale of selling the same shares twice over, and on another the shocking revelation of the theft by our cutpurse of the firm's pension fund, and I rather think that by about page 27 they would be demanding their money back.

But, you see, the professionals are not much better off. They too face the difficulty of showing Maxwell plain while making the character incredible or too threadbare; where do they go from there? They could have a stab at it, I suppose, in the manner of Dickens, who was at his best when delineating grotesques, but no novelist set such a task could do it without cynicism adulterating his ink, something

that Dickens would find abhorrent, and that would surely rule out *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Oliver Twist*, *Big Dorrie*, *Pickpocket Paper*, *Our Mutual Friend*, *David Copperfield* or *Great Expectations*.

Some possibilities have to be ruled out at once: for instance a romantic novel, Maxwell the dashing hero with aye for the ladies, his depradation turning out to be of the Robin Hood kind – taking from the wicked banks and giving to the *Mirror* pension fund – would lack verisimilitude.

Even more difficult would be the task of those trying to emulate Dostoevsky by giving Maxwell a soul with which to wrestle even as he forges another cheque; but although Dostoevsky could make a wonderfully vivid cameo out of Joe Haines, no lesser genius could do it, or even, perhaps, want to.

If novels won't do, what about the stage? I have a recollection of seeing a play, many years ago, based on the life of Ivar Kreuger (possibly the biggest businessman rose until Maxwell); and I think I found it convincing. That would not be surprising, the drama can be far less subtle than a novel and get away with it. Well, Tom Stoppard was complaining the other day that he couldn't think of an idea for a play, and I ride a note to go round and kick him vigorously in the shins until he screamed for mercy and got down to work.

That said, there is always the O. Henry form of cion, with the twist in the tail. If one was real, I heard it myself. Some hours after Maxwell's body had been found, Brenda Dean, head of the printworkers' union – *et exi fugaces* – was interviewed on radio. She was asked if she thought he had deliberately jumped into the sea. She demurred and the interviewer said "But he was under great stress and strain – might not his troubles have led him to drown himself?" "No, no," she said, "he loved stress and strain, it was his element – why, he could walk on water."

P.S. Hal Stoppard tells me he is at work on a play, *not* presumably, about Maxwell.

Winter Palace by the Russian artist Anatoli Kazantsev.

So large is the canvas that it had to be removed from its frame and rolled up in order to get it through the door. But Harrods will not make a penny from the £40,000 asking price, which has not been reduced for the sale. Proceeds will go to the Royal Marsden Cancer Appeal.

People like US

ONLY the ticker-tape was missing as American pizzazz and swagger hit the new year celebrations on the streets of London yesterday. To the astonishment of bargain-hunters in the new year sales, cheerleaders from all over America

came in its histor at least in terms of number of reformers on stage, some 3,500. The band, the Krays from Czechoslovakia, spent 48 hours driving across Europe to get there.

Is anybody listening? SCOTTISH TELEVISION has decided to increase its Gaelic output. With the injection of an extra £9.5 million in government cash, the company plans to increase its 36 hours of Gaelic transmissions last year to 300 hours by 1993.

There is just one problem: if you can't find any actors who speak the language. As a result courses in Gaelic are now being offered by Scottish Television to experienced professional actors, who are keen to learn Gaelic.

But if the station cannot find Gaelic-speaking actors, is it finding Gaelic-listening audiences? The Scottish Office, which has put up the cash, is adamant that people are watching. "There is great enthusiasm for us. Lots of people like it," insists a spokesman. Others remain unconvinced. BBC Radio Scotland sports that when its Gaelic broadcasts go out, listening figures slum.

As Madrid enjoyed its first day of its year as European City of Culture, the Irish launched an enquiry into why Dublin's year, which ended at midday on Tuesday, was such a flop. The Irish prime minister Charles Haughey says it "won the city international recognition". Unfortunately it was almost entirely unrecognised in the city itself. A report by the consultants Irish Economic Advisors says that more than 90 per cent of Dubliners were unaware of their city's role as cultural capital. Fewer than 5 per cent could identify a single event associated with it.

House of troubles

THE NEW YEAR will bring no respite to the beleaguered Royal Opera House. After John Dew's production of *Les Huguenots* last year gave the House its biggest critical disaster in years, Covent Garden is to reward him with two new productions.

No announcement has been made, but the Diary has learnt that Dew has been approached to stage a new production of *The Magic Flute* and the little-known *La Juive* by Jacques Halevy.

Dew's production of *Les Huguenots* provoked boos, catcalls and cries of "rubbish" from the audience in November. Despite scathing criticism, Paul Findlay, Covent Garden's director of opera, who is due to leave the job next year and who recommended Dew's production, insisted that he "stood by" his choice but few believed that Dew would work at the house again.

There are also the prospects of holes appearing in next season's programme planning. One of the centrepieces was hoped to be *Porgy and Bess*, an important production for Covent Garden as a counter to accusations of elitism. But the additional costs, including the Gershwin estate's stipulation of a black cast, may jeopardise the production.

On top of that, Luciano Pavarotti has been signed up to sing five performances of *Tosca*, but since he blighted the house with two cancellations last year, Jeremy Isaacs and his staff must be reduced to touching wood. And if he does appear, will the crash diet he has just undertaken have an adverse effect upon the sublime voice? Many in the world of opera say that after Maria Callas lost weight she never sounded so powerful again.

Sale storming SHOPPERS who stormed Harrods for the opening of its sale yesterday were greeted by a large canvas depicting an even more famous storming: the Bolshevik attack on the Tsar's palace in St Petersburg in 1917.

With the Soviet Union now part

of history, it has apparently become safe to commemorate the bloody and violent moment of communism's triumph within the portals of high capitalism: pride of place in the store's Georgian restaurant has been given to a huge painting. *The Storming of the*

Winter Palace by the Russian artist Anatoli Kazantsev.

So large is the canvas that it had

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NATIONS UNITED

Boutros Boutros Ghali takes office as Secretary-General of the United Nations at a time when the organisation's authority, effectiveness and international reputation stand at their highest. His predecessor, the dogged, quiet-spoken Javier Perez de Cuellar, has bequeathed to him an institution that only now is beginning to live up to the dreams of its progenitors. Yesterday's news that Cyrus Vance has at last secured the agreement of both Serbs and Croats to the UN peace plan for Yugoslavia is a welcome beginning to Dr Boutros Ghali's term of office, just as the peace accord his predecessor negotiated for El Salvador on Tuesday is a fitting tribute to a man who served the world community more effectively than any of the big powers imagined when they confirmed him into office a decade ago.

The imminent dispatch of 10,000 peace-keeping troops to Yugoslavia underlines the fact that even in the most intractable conflicts, the UN now wields considerable clout. The world body so long derided as cumbersome and hamstrung by bureaucracy appears to be on the verge of success just as the European Community, attempting a task that always looked beyond its competence, has virtually given up trying to negotiate yet another ceasefire between the warring Serbs and Croats.

But it is not only in Yugoslavia that the UN is being asked to broker an end to hostilities, separate the combatants and feed, clothe and shelter the victims of war and famine. Since the conference in Geneva that led to the pull-out of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the UN has been at the heart of peace-making and peace-keeping around the world. In Cambodia it has already embarked on its most ambitious mission since the Congo. In Cyprus Dr Boutros Ghali may make the breakthrough that long frustrated his predecessor. In Somalia the UN is being asked to end a bloodbath, and in western Sahara it is devising a referendum to replace a guerrilla struggle.

There are, of course, still areas where suspicions are so intense, such as the Middle East, or where conflicts are so bound up with national sovereignty, such as Sri Lanka, East

Timor and Northern Ireland, that the UN has been denied any peace-making role. Significantly, however, calls have grown for the world body to intervene in all of them. The Gulf war was the clearest example of the UN's new vitality. The Security Council's determination to use the rusty instruments devised by its founders to repel aggression and the deference paid to it by the United States and the Western allies in the escalation of the political confrontation have been taken as evidence of the international community's new faith in the UN as the guardian of world peace. The reason, however, has little to do with Iraq. It has everything to do with President Gorbachev and the end of the Cold War.

It is almost three years since the former Soviet leader declared his country's willingness to pay all its UN debts, cooperate more closely with the UN, and use UN machinery more fully. He was as good as his word. Moscow quickly undercut the posturing of third world countries which believed that clichéd accusations of western imperialism would win them spurious progressive credentials: communism, aid and international solidarity. The built-in anti-American majority was thus rapidly cut back. This in turn revived flagging American faith in a body it had begun to despise. The stage was set for a new authority in New York.

It is now up to Dr Boutros Ghali to use this authority in a world still racked by warfare, famine and the threat of instability and political extremism. He was not the first choice of most members, and will have to work energetically to overcome lingering suspicions that he is too old, too bland and too lacking in international stature for the job. But he will only be as good as the support he is given. John Major, despite his well-publicised impatience at UN dithering over the Kurds, has shown that Britain, at least, is committed to a continuing increase in UN authority. Using the advantage of its permanent seat and a formidably shrewd and energetic representative in New York, Britain could give Dr Ghali the decisive support he will need to make his mark. He, and the UN, deserve no less.

WRITS GALORE

The late Robert Maxwell was a leading patron of the legal profession. His writs were not so much served as sprayed. Those he sued ranged from *Private Eye* to the Department of Trade and Industry. Yet he rarely pursued a case through to a jury verdict, relying upon the "bullying" effect of the size of a writ on any journalist getting too close to the truth for his comfort. His success in this tactic revealed serious defects in the British law of libel and the way it operates.

What most aroused his litigious anger was any reference to the report of the Department of Trade and Industry in 1971 which had declared him "not... a person who can be relied upon to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly quoted company." This pre-scient judgment was made by Sir Ronald Leach, a distinguished accountant, and Sir Owen Sable, a no less distinguished commercial lawyer who became a High Court judge. Thanks to Maxwell's writs, their words — which had privileged protection against action for libel — were far less widely known than they should have been. Though repetition of their conclusion was also privileged unless shown to be done with deliberate malice, Maxwell was often quick to accuse his opponents of this.

Once a writ for defamation and statement of claim has been served — which takes little effort or cost — the burden of proof immediately switches to the defendant to construct as strong a defence as possible — which takes a great deal of both. These procedural rules were not intended to offer a litigant a range of delaying or bullying tactics, but Maxwell became an expert at manipulating them that way.

If he was master of the abuse of legal process, most of the reforms needed to defeat such devices should be reforms of procedure too. A committee under Lord Justice Neill, which reviewed the law of defamation at the request of the Lord Chancellor, reported earlier this year with sensible, though perhaps overcautious, proposals for reform. To the Neill proposals should be added

innovations in defamation law from other countries with a common law tradition, such as Ireland and Australia.

In the aftermath of Maxwell's disgrace, America's libel laws have been held out as superior to Britain's, on the grounds that they would have made publication of scandals about his sharp practices far easier. So they would. But American libel laws go to the other way: the requirement on the plaintiff to prove actual malice on the part of the defendant is too onerous.

Less drastically, the Irish Law Reform Commission has recently proposed that writs not proceeded with after a period of six or 12 months should automatically be struck out. That would bring a better balance to the opening skirmishes in a libel action, and make it harder to use a writ to gag a legitimate journalistic investigation.

An even better example to follow would be that from Australia, where qualified privilege is being introduced in cases where defamatory allegations are made in good faith, in the public interest, and after "reasonable" enquiries. When they inadvertently go wrong, newspapers will be expected to correct the record promptly. Such new defence against libel would reduce the measure of uncertainty which faces publishers and editors now, encouraging both excessive caution by journalists and the tactics of intimidation by those with something to hide.

At present, given the capriciousness of modern libel juries and the vagueness of the law, no lawyer would advise a client that victory was certain, however good the defence. A lost case and large damages could mean ruin for a medium-sized media business. Such unpredictability forced investigative journalists to take Maxwell's threats seriously. But a well balanced law of libel should not only save the innocent from calumny; it must also protect anybody whose job it is to expose the guilty. Hatred, ridicule and contempt is their due and the law should not shield them from it.

WOMEN IN THE FAST LANE

Beware extrapolation. A few cold winters do not denote an imminent Ice Age. Yet scientists are too often tempted to assume that if a line on a graph points in one direction, it will continue to do so for ever. Two scientists from the University of California now claim that men are losing their ascendancy over women on the athletics track and will be overtaken by the middle of the next century. They draw this conclusion from looking at the speeds men and women have reached since the 1920s. Because women's speeds have increased twice as fast as men's they argue that by 1998, women should be beating men at the marathon and later at shorter distances too.

There are any number of reasons why women should have improved faster than men, from less cumbersome clothing through later child-bearing to the greater social acceptability of their competing in sport. Seventy years ago, few women would have dared venture on to the athletics track, while sport for men has always been a noble pursuit. As more women have taken part in sport, so has their training been taken more seriously. They were bound to narrow the gap with their brethren.

But can women ever pip men to the post? Only in a very few events. Women already compete equally with men on horseback, where skill is more important than brute strength. But on the track, women's bodies

only prove the equal of men's at distances far longer than the marathon, where their famous capacity for endurance comes into play. Women simply have more stamina. Female babies are more likely to survive than boys; more women came out of concentration camps alive than men. As Dr Craig Sharp of the British Olympic Medical Institute says, "If Scott of the Antarctic had been a woman, she might have made it."

Some women will always be able to outrun some men, just as Billie Jean King could beat Bobby Riggs, a triple Wimbledon winner who unwisely boasted that no woman could thrash him on the court. But the fastest women will never match the fastest men simply because speed at running comes down eventually to muscular strength, and men's bodies, at their best, are stronger than women's.

This is good news for women, not bad, for it allows them to race on a level athletics field. If they were expected to compete against men, they would be deemed a success only when they beat men. Far better for them to attempt to become the fastest females to run a mile than to try to be the fastest human beings at that distance and inevitably fail.

Women can be proud of their athletic achievements without feeling overshadowed by men. The honest, after all, would be outflown by a sparrow, but she is still queen of the jungle.

Dilemma over devaluation of sterling

From Sir Peter Hordern, MP for Horsham (Conservative)

Sir: You believe that Britain should devalue sterling against the Deutschmark and other European currencies (leading article, December 30). You believe we should do so because you think that the Bundesbank raised interest rates as part of a power struggle between the Bundesbank and the German government which is nothing to do with us. You also think Britain first joined the exchange-rate mechanism at the wrong rate.

As to the second reason, sterling did not appear uncompetitive with the DM before we joined the ERM, and it does not appear out of line now. But, whatever the political motive may have been, there is no question but that the German financial deficit is already large and is growing fast.

Of course, it would have been better and much more convenient if the German government were to raise taxes to reduce the deficit. But if taxes are not raised, then it seems perverse to blame the Bundesbank for doing what it is there to do.

Thanks to careful management, we have a rather small general government deficit at present, and in prospect. That being so, there is no internal reason to raise interest rates. In time, perhaps after the election has removed the threat of a Labour government, financial markets may well come to recognise that our smaller deficit makes sterling relatively rather attractive compared with the DM, so that sterling should strengthen within the ERM, even to the extent that we may be able to reduce interest rates still further.

But that is not the position at the moment. What would happen if we were to devalue? If by a small amount, then how long would that last in view of all the assurances that have been given? If by a large amount, then what is there to prevent business and industry returning to their bad old ways, paying whatever salaries are demanded in the knowledge that the government will accommodate them by devaluing the currency again?

Devaluation is no easy solution, as we have come to know, after many years. As First Lord of the Treasury, Mrs Thatcher took us into the ERM, perhaps rather late, but certainly to show that we were serious about curbing inflation, rather than through enthusiasm for any European ideal.

That decision still holds good. It is not necessary to mount a conspiracy theory about Germany to induce us to abandon the best guarantee of non-inflationary growth, which remains our membership of the ERM at the present rate of exchange. It may be hard, but in the long run it is right.

Yours faithfully,
PETER HORDERN,
House of Commons.
December 30.

From Mr W. E. Abbotts
Sir, "Cabinet refuses to be panicked," says your headline today (later editions), before quoting Mr Major: "We are now seeing the first signs of recovery, and all forecasters expect to see our economy growing again in the coming year" (as in 1991). This is the stuff of Dad's Army, Corporal Jones speaking.

Scots scotched

From Mrs Olive Russell

Sir, I was delighted to read your report ("Auld tongue gets new prestige", December 18) that the professor of English at Edinburgh University intends to set up a Scottish language course next year. Can the shades of William Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, David Lyndsay et al be hovering over the Scottish Education Department, after 120 years of apathy?

The Education Act of 1872 practically obliterated the Scottish language. Efforts made by the Vernacular Circle of the Burns Club of London in the 1920s, petitioning the Scottish Office to institute a chair of Scottish literature and language in one of the older Scottish universities, were ignored.

Now, 70 years later, Glasgow has produced eight graduates (of whom I am one), with more in the pipeline, and Edinburgh is evidently going to follow suit. These proposals would have delighted the original council of the Vernacular Circle. The riches pawned in 1707 are being redeemed at last.

Yours sincerely,
OLIVE RUSSELL,
4 The Gardens,
West Harrow, Middlesex.

From Mr T. V. Edwards

Sir, If Scots is a "living language, with a rich and complex literature", as your leading article affirms (December 19), what description would befit the more vibrant Welsh language? Ironically, although spoken by hundreds of thousands in Wales (and spoken in what is now Scotland some 1,500 years ago), it still has to fight for its continued existence.

What it needs, obviously, is the imprimatur of *The Times*, in the form of an editorial, please!

Yours faithfully,
T. V. EDWARDS
19A Heol y Coed,
Rhiwbrina, Cardiff 4.
December 19.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Need for inter-faith understanding

From the Provost of Birmingham

Sir, I am so afraid that rising tensions, exclusions and declarations in the inter-faith debate will stultify all dialogue and progress in understanding between religious communities here in the inner cities.

Yours sincerely,
PETER BERRY,
Birmingham Cathedral,
Colmore Row, Birmingham 3.
December 30.

From Archdeacon Derek Hayward
Sir, Clifford Longley (December 21) is mistaken if he supposes that the Christian claim to uniqueness is based on Christ's teachings, which are largely paralleled in other world religions. On the contrary, it is based on the person of Christ himself, who is unique because he alone has provided a way of understanding suffering which answers to the human condition.

The world is urgently in need of more theological study of world religions. In Britain, I feel, the subject is still not quite respectable as mainstream; the theologians of the Roman Church claimed that this was only possible through her own worship; recently she has somewhat relaxed this claim, but such relaxation cannot be extended to worship in other faiths, for the simple reason that this is not its object.

This is not to say that other faiths do not have insights which are latent or lacking in Christianity, and we may have much to learn from them; but the Cross of Christ and its power of redemptive suffering are unique, and we compromise them at our peril.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK HAYWARD,
The Vicarage, 61 Church Street,
Isleworth, Middlesex.
December 22.

From Mr E. H. Campion
Sir, Mr Longley has some urgent homework to do. Ecumenicalism has not yet reached the point where a Christian may, without risk of rebuke, wish a Jew a Happy New Year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Yours faithfully,
E. H. CAMPION,
8 Lawn Crescent, Richmond, Surrey.
December 21.

National TV archive

From the Director of the British Film Institute

Sir, Alvin Rakoff's letter (December 26) was a timely reminder of how much has been lost of our early BBC television heritage. Unfortunately, we also have to accept that most of the early ITV arts and drama has been lost, in addition to priceless current affairs and news coverage.

However, things are getting better. The BBC has a royal charter responsibility to maintain an archive of its programmes, and does so through its film and video programme library.

The British Film Institute has been archiving key examples of our television since the early 1950s, and in more recent times has been funded by the ITV companies and by Channel 4, to record approximately 25 per cent of their output. Although this sounds a low figure, in practice it means that most original British production is being archived, and kept in appropriate conditions.

Therefore we have the basis for a National Television Archive, which we are anxious to maintain and extend, as well as to provide access to it — for example through the regional film archives, and the development of videotheques and of the successful programme of archive television screenings at the Museum of the Moving Image.

I am delighted to hear that some hitherto "lost" television programmes may still be in existence, and I appeal to Mr Rakoff and his colleagues to contact us and to deposit the material they hold, which will find a safe home with us.

Yours faithfully,
WILF STEVENSON, Director,
British Film Institute,
21 Stephen Street, W1.
December 27.

Not so silent

From Mr Andrew Sewell

Sir, Peter Barnard ("Nights are silent, now we lack this Hardy perennial", Christmas Eve) would find no "silent night" in this village.

The combined church choirs toured the village on several nights for Christian Aid. The village band, descended from the church musicians evicted when an organ was installed well over 150 years ago, called here and elsewhere on Christmas Eve with our favourite carols; it then serenaded the village, starting at 4am this morning with "Christians awake" and continuing until the church bells rang out at 7am.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW SEWELL,
Bay House, Aldbourne, Wiltshire.
Caernarfon, Gwynedd.
December 25.

Son of a gun?

From Mrs Sally Holloway

Sir, Your customary, fascinating report (January 1) on popular first names must, of necessity, fail to include some of the more esoteric "monikers" borne by today's children.

"I'm Jason," said the elder, "e's Wess." "Ah!" I said, "as in John Wesley?" "Nah!" came the rightly scornful reply. "Wess as in Wesson — Smif an' Wesson."

Yours truly,
SALLY HOLLOWAY,
95 Lonsdale Road, Barnes, SW13.
January 1.

Sports letters, page 22
Business letters, page 29

Jack in the box

SOCIAL NEWS

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.N. Anderson
and **Miss M.E. McGahan**
The engagement is announced between Neal, son of Mr and Mrs J.F. Anderson, of Aldeburgh, Suffolk, and Mary, daughter of Mr J.H.P. McGahan, MBE, and Mrs McGahan, of Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

Mr T.H.A. Barton
and **Miss F.J. Familia**
The engagement is announced between Thomas, son of Mr and Mrs H. Barton, of Liss, Hampshire, and Jane, daughter of Dr and Mrs H. Familia, of Hepple, Morpeth, Northumberland.

Mr M.J.M. Bennett
and **Miss C.A.M. Helford**
The engagement is announced between Martin, son of Dr and Mrs P.M.J. Bennett, of Pierrepont House, Pyrford Woods, Woking, Surrey, and Catherine, daughter of Mr and Mrs F.L. Helford, of 46 London Road, Guildford, Surrey.

Mr S.M.R. Edwards
and **Miss G. Greenwood**
The engagement is announced between Simon, son of Mr and Mrs Timothy Edwards, of Upton Bishop, Herefordshire, and Gillian, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Greenwood, of Otley, West Yorkshire.

Mr N.R. Eliot
and **Miss S.J. Anderson**
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, eldest son of Mr and Mrs K. Eliot, Ampleforth, North Yorkshire, and Sarah, elder daughter of Dr and Mrs D. Anderson, Skelton, York.

Mr D.A. Esson
and **Miss L.M. Melconian**
The engagement is announced between David Alexander, youngest son of Mrs Rhona Esson and the late Lieutenant A.F. Esson, RN, of Mill Hill, London, and Lucille Mary, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Melconian, also of Mill Hill, London.

Mr G.N.M. Lawton
and **Miss K.M. Platt**
The engagement is announced between Giles, elder son of Dr and Mrs R.M. Lawton, of Cumnor Hill, Oxford, (formerly of East Horsley) and Katie, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Adrian Platt, of East Horsley, Surrey.

Mr J.S. Moesel
and **Miss C. Start**
The engagement is announced between Joseph Sams, younger son of the late Mr Frederick C. Moesel, Jnr, and of Mrs Moesel, of Rosemont, Pennsylvania, USA, and Claudia Charlotte, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs John Sturt, of Scam Park, Ashton-under-Lyne, and St Antonin-Noble-Val, France.

Birthdays today

Professor Isaac Asimov, author, 72; **Mr David Bailey**, photographer, 54; **Mr N.H. Baring**, chairman, Commercial Union Assurance, 58; **Sir Richard Bayliss**, former Physician to The Queen, 75; **Mr Leopold Brook**, former chairman, Associated Nuclear Services; 80; **Mr Christopher Campbell**, chairman, British Shipbuilders, 56; the Duke of Devonshire, 72; **Professor Sir Kingsley Dunham**, geologist, 82; **Mr Walter Harrison**, former MP, 71; **Miss Hilary Heilbron**, QC, 43; **Sir Anthony Lincoln**, diplomat, 81; **Mr Doug McAvoy**, trades unionist, 53; **Lord Nelson**, of Stamford, 75; **Mr D.B. Patullo**, governor, Bank of Scotland, 54; **Sir Charles Reece**, former group research and technology director, IC1, 65; **Mr Edmund de Roth-**

Marriage

Mr R.B. Smith
and **Mrs E.J. Hurley**

The marriage took place, quietly, on Sunday, December 15, at Wetherby, between Mr Richard Barclay Smith and Mrs Anne Elizabeth Hurley.

Church news

Resignations and retirements

The Rev Donald Bird, Rector, Sconer and East Ferry (Lincoln); to retire as from March 31 1992. **The Rev John K Cotton**, Priest-in-Charge, Byke w Brromesby, Rendlesham, Tunstall and Wantisden, Alderton w Ramshill and Bawsey, and also Group Leader of the Wilford Peninsula (S Edmundsbury and Ipswich); to retire as from September 30 1992.

The Rev Catherine Davies, Assistant Curate, Saint Mary and Nicolas, Spalding (Lincoln); to resign as from January 31 1992. **The Rev Arthur Nuttall**, Rector, Walham (Lincoln); to retire as from January 31 1992.

The Rev Brian Pritchard, Vicar, Welton (Lincoln); to retire as from April 30 1992.

The Rev John Rhodes, Vicar, Owston Ferry w West Butterwick (Lincoln); to retire as from March 16 1992.

The Rev Grahame Smith, Rector, Uffington (Lincoln); to retire as from February 9 1992.

Bridewell in danger

CONSERVATIONISTS are trying to save the Georgian bridewell at Wymondham, Norfolk, which inspired the first penitentiary in the United States. Parts of the building are still occupied but the magistrates court sat there for the last time on Tuesday, and new uses for the vacant rooms are being sought. A feasibility study is being prepared by the Civil Trust.

The bridewell was considered a move towards a better penal system when it opened in 1785. Underground cells were provided to keep different types of offenders apart and the sexes were segregated.

OBITUARIES

SERGEANT-MAJOR PHIL PHILLIPS

Sergeant-Major Horace Cyril "Phil" Phillips, MBE, MVO, Welsh Guards, former sergeant-major of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and of the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeoman of the Guard, died on Christmas Day aged 76. He was born on March 27, 1915.

THE Duke of Kent, King Husain of Jordan, nine former princes, two sultans and a sheikh were among the 6,000 cadets trained by Phil Phillips. When he marched off the parade ground at Sandhurst for the last time, as Academy Sergeant Major — the most senior sergeant-major in the army — it could truly be said that he had moulded a new generation of young officers.

Phillips himself belonged to a new generation of sergeant-majors — though he might not have looked it. Well over six foot and weighing 14 stone, a former guards lightweight boxing champion, he appeared every inch the traditional RSM as he towered over his charges on the square, his boots and brasses outshining their own. He believed in the virtues of drill, if only to teach soldiers how to react to a command and he cultivated a resonant bellow to go with it. He argued that it was no use calling "Fire" on the battlefield if the men had to shout back "What?" He was horrified on visit to West Point to find the drill instructors using megaphones.

Underneath, however, Phillips was a gentle giant who never swore at or bullied his recruits. He thought seriously about his work and responsibilities. He read widely on politics and current affairs and advised all his cadets to do the same. Before being posted with his regiment overseas he would spend days studying the local situation.

Phillips was born at Chepstow, Gwent, into an army family. His father had served in both the Boer War and the first world war and although young Phil trained as a



butcher on leaving school, his ambition was always to sign on with the Welsh Guards. He did so in 1934 and after his first spell of public duties in London, mounting guard at Buckingham Palace, he went with his battalion to Gibraltar. When war broke out, it became the first unit of the British Expeditionary Force, sailing to Marseilles by battleship then travelling north by train.

Phillips was captured near Arns, however, during the Dunkirk retreat and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner in Poland, in Stalag 383. The Germans started moving their prisoners west to escape from the advancing Russians in 1945 and Phillips was one of a group who wrested control from the SS shortly before they were liberated by the Americans.

He then volunteered to return to active service and was

about to be drafted to the Far East when Japan surrendered. Instead he went with the Welsh Guards to Palestine and on return took part in the first trooping of the colour since the war. The escort to the colour was provided by the Welsh Guards 1st battalion's Prince of Wales company with Phillips as the company sergeant-major.

After postings in West Germany and Berlin he took part in the 1953 coronation, then went on his first tour of duty at Sandhurst as regimental sergeant major of Old College, one of the three constituent parts of the academy. He was seconded to the King's African Rifles in East Africa, then in the early 1960s returned to Sandhurst as Academy Sergeant Major in succession to the legendary John Lord.

Colleagues warned him

that Lord would be a difficult act to follow, especially as Phillips was the first Welsh Guardsman in the job, following a long line of Grenadiers. But when Phillips retired in December 1970, marching up Old College steps after Sovereign's Parade while the band played "Auld Lang Syne" he had carved out his own place in Sandhurst history.

The army said at the time that had he accepted the chance of a commission he would probably have become a lieutenant-colonel. But he argued that while there were many lieutenant-colonels, there was only one Academy Sergeant Major. On retirement he was offered the post of senior messenger sergeant-major of the Queen's Bodyguard, twinned with that of superintendent of St. James's Palace. The first involved organising the 66-man bodyguard as its only permanent official — and parading with them in Tudor uniform and white ruff.

Already the veteran of King George V's Silver Jubilee, George VI's funeral and eight trooping of the colour, he now added a succession of state occasions, including the Prince of Wales's wedding and the annual state opening of Parliament. One of his last parades marked the bodyguard's 500th anniversary.

His other job consisted of running St James's Palace apartments and brought with it his own apartment at the palace. After ten years, when he was 65, the Queen took the unusual step of asking him to stay on for five more years, after which he finally retired to his native Wales.

Phillips was a notable rugby player in his youth, turning out as flanker for Newport, London Welsh and the army and for the Welsh Guards when they won the army cup after the war. In retirement he still played golf and worked for his local church and army charities.

He is survived by his wife Glens, their son and two daughters.

DENNIS MARTIN-JENKINS

Dennis Martin-Jenkins, TD, shipping industry leader, died on December 4 aged 80. He was born on January 7, 1911.

DENNIS Martin-Jenkins revolutionised Ellerman Lines, the shipping company, turning it from a sleepy, conventional liner company into a soundly performing, diversified group with professional management and excellent businesses in container shipping, brewing, travel and the ownership of The Belfry Hotel and Golf Courses. He gave great service to the world's shipping industry. He was president of the UK Chamber of Shipping in 1965 and chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping from 1971-77, where his charm and humour were much respected and admired by the international community.

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He is survived by his wife Glens, their son and two daughters.

during the second world war.

After the war, he made his mark with Ellerman Lines in Glasgow and Liverpool and moved to London as a director in 1951. His hard work, negotiating abilities and leadership qualities led to his becoming company chairman from 1967 to 1981 and managing director from 1967 to 1976.

In addition to his business activities, Martin-Jenkins gave much time and effort to secure the future of St Bede's School, Eastbourne, his old prep school, where he became chairman of the governors and later life president.

Martin-Jenkins had a strong and, at times, courageous character and personality. Aggressive, combative and domineering; he was also warm, charming and funny.

For a man whose real loves were his family, people and sport — he was an excellent tennis player and cricketer — it is fitting that it was perhaps The Belfry, home of Europe's Ryder Cup golf victories in 1985 and 1989, that gave him his greatest business satisfaction. An investment scored by many at Ellerman Lines as "The chairman's folly", the hotel became valued at fifty times its original cost.

He is survived by his wife and three sons.



CHARLES LEVINE

Charles A. Levine who in 1927 became the first man to fly the Atlantic non-stop as a passenger, died in Washington on December 6 aged 94. He was born in North Adams, Massachusetts, in 1897.

CHARLES Levine was also almost, but not quite, a great American hero. But for an unkindly quarrel which delayed the take-off of his aircraft for a few hours, the mantle which fell on Charles Lindbergh would have belonged to him and his pilot, Clarence Chamberlin.

At the time of the flight, Levine was a self-made millionaire, his fortune founded on a contract with the US War Department which gave him the right to buy and dispose of spent shell casings. He had left school before graduation to help in his father's scrap metal business, and set up his own company in 1917.

He branched out into airplane manufacturing during the 1920's, and though much of his wealth was lost in the stock market crash at the end of the decade he continued to back flying adventures and spent large sums on experimental planes.

Levine fell foul of the law in 1937, when he was jailed for two years on a smuggling-conspiracy charge involving 2,000 pounds of Canadian tungsten powder. Then in 1942 he was accused of smuggling a German alien into the US from Mexico. The alien concerned was identified at the trial as a refugee from a concentration camp, but it made no difference; Levine went back to jail for 150 days.

He is survived by his daughter.

ISTVÁN VAS

István Vas, Hungarian autobiographer, translator, essayist and poet, died in Budapest on December 16 aged 81. He was born there on September 24, 1910.

ISTVÁN Vas, one of Hungary's most distinguished and learned men of letters, was most famous for his four-volume autobiography, *Néhány személy* (1964-1967). "A Difficult Love?", *Miért vitték a Saksékes?* (1981) "Why Does the Eagle Scream?" and *Azután* (1991 "Afterwards"), a valuable behind-the-scenes guide to both inter-war and post-war Hungarian literary life, as well as to the personal mental struggles of a man of integrity and liberal sensibility to adjust to a difficult environment. Vas won Hungary's leading literary prize, the Kossuth, twice.

Born into a Jewish family, Vas reluctantly pursued a business career until 1945, when he went into publishing with all its extreme vicissitudes, owing to the intrusion of semi-literate Stalinist culture-clerks into what was "correct" or otherwise. He threaded his way through these sinister labyrinths with tact and honour, turning his own genius for some long time to translation, that com-

mon refuge of liberals trapped by the restrictions imposed by the post-war Russian empire. Among his most remarkable translations are those from Villon (1940), Apollinaire (1940), the English metaphysical poets (1946) and from Shakespeare, Racine, O'Neill and Maeterlinck. It is in these that Vas showed his capacities most clearly.

Vas came first under the influence of the aggressive avant garde artistic poet Lajos Kassák, whose real heyday had been in the years of the first world war and just after. Now a rather isolated, if still powerful, figure who had spent six years of exile in Vienna, on account of his part in the communist coup, he ran the magazine *Munka* (1928-39), as an alternative to the more conservative mainstream *Nyugat* ("West") of Mihály Babits and his circle. This had been running since the first decade of the century. Kassák, whose step-daughter Vas married in 1936, ran *Munka* as an experimental alternative to *Nyugat*, and influenced Vas in the deliberate bucolicism of his first collection of poems, *Osztr Rombold* (1932, "Autumn Destruction"), which,

nonetheless, clearly showed his classical leanings. Later Vas turned increasingly to Babits, and ended by being regarded as a leading representative of the last phase of *Nyugat*. His poetry was somewhat self-conscious and unoriginal in its themes, and he never asserted himself as a major figure in this genre as the incomparable Endre Ady before him and Attila József just after him. However, he was a master of poetic technique — no Hungarian poet of this century could better him: "Vas," wrote a French critic, "achieved an astonishingly soft and calm tone in a paradoxically severe poetry of vast cosmic implications." The few available translations of his work into English cannot do justice to him because of this — and also, perhaps, because they have for the most part been done from indifferent cribs supplied by professors. His most impressive and representative collection was *Aterembenyi világ* (1956, "The Creation"); this consists of a selection of poetry from the period 1930-39, together with new war and post-war poems. It might be said that Vas had almost too much mastery over language, since the quality known as inspiration — the

sheer compulsion to write — does not mark his poetry as a whole.

Although he had converted to Christianity upon his marriage to Kassák's step-daughter Vas, from the time he turned towards Babits gradually changed his religious philosophy and finally became, so far as is apparent, the kind of rationalist-humanist who found his roots mainly in medieval thinking. However, a vital strain of semi-mystical belief remained, from a figure with whom he most liked to identify himself, Nicolas of Cusa (1401-64), the German neoplatonic cardinal-philosopher who believed that truth is inaccessible to human beings, and that God can only be discovered by intuition since he exists only where "all contradictions meet".

Vas was a very distinguished essayist, especially on Hungarian subjects, and a much-prized and generous mentor to younger writers. Flashier talents who had compromised themselves often eclipsed him in the difficult years, but he emerged into post-communism with rare credit. He was married twice more, in 1945, and then again, finally happily, in 1951.

The pair ran out of fuel

Archaeology

Britons to map ancient caravan city

BY NORMAN HAMMOND, ARCHAEOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH archaeologists are to join in the exploration of one of the great caravan cities of Central Asia. Merv, in Turkmenia, has been selected by Unesco as an area of world historic importance, and scholars from the EC and Russia are working on it.

The Merv oasis, on the ancient route west from Samarkand to the Caspian, was a vital staging post on the Silk Road as well as the centre of an important farming region. The city was fought over by the Medes, Achaeamenids, Seleucids and Parthians, and

Georgina Herrman, of University College London, said: "We also plan limited excavation and a survey of standing monuments, to prepare a synopsis for publication by the 2,500th anniversary of the city of Merv in 1995."

The British effort will be concentrated in the oldest parts of Merv: the massive circular enclosure of Erk Qala is thought to date to Achaemenid times, while abutting it are

NEW RELEASES

• **CURLY SUE** (PG) Con man and mugger with the heart of a corporate attorney. Ugly mug of stepmom and sentiment, with a resemble child star (Alec) Porter). With Jennifer Beahl, Kelly Lynch, Michael Caine, John Cannons. Fulham Road (071-370 2838) Haymarket (071-839 5327) Oxford Street (071-638 0310) MGH Tivoli (071-454 0031) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STARS** (18) Ghetto borglars penetrate their evil landlord's house. Lively mix of new Grimm fairy story, and social satire from the same team that made *Starring Brandon Adams*. Everett McGill, Wendy Robie.

Cannon Fulham Road (071-370 2836) Empire (071-497 9999) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **RHOULETTO** (PG) Pavesets into the high notes, but Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's film of Verdi's opera remains resolutely stage-bound. Made for television in 1982. With Ingmar Bergman, Edita Gruberova, and Riccardo Chailly conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. Barbican (071-638 8897).

CURRENT

• **THE ADDAMS FAMILY** (PG) Tacky least of black humour, inspired by the 1960s TV spin-off from Charles Addams's macabre cartoons. Starring Raul Julia, Raul Julia, Barry Sonnenfeld. Cannon Balker Street (071-935 9772) Cinema City (071-936 0088) Oxford Street (071-638 0310) Odeon Kensington (071-416561) Marble Arch (0436 914501) West End (0426 915574) Screen on the Green (071-226 3200) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **AN AMERICAN TAIL - FIEVU** (G) Good old US Hechz sequel to the 1987 animation hit about immigrant mice, best when it reworks Western clichés. A Steven Spielberg production, director, Peter Nibbelink, Simon Wells

• **BECKET**: Rousing performances from Derek Jacobi and Robert Lindsay. In Amélie's play on the relationship between Thomas à Becket and Henry II. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (071-920 8000) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mats Wed, Sat, 3pm, 6.30pm.

• **BLOOD WILL OUT**: Lorca's *María Stuart* in Cuban. The sexual passion is thin, bloodlines Lorca (National) (Comedie), South Bank, London SE1 (071-922 2232). Tonight, 7.30pm, 120 mins.

• **THE CABINET MINISTER**: Derek Nimmo and Maureen Lipman in a smoky, largely unconvincing political farce. Albery (071-454 2076) Mon-Sat, 8pm, 8.30pm, 9pm, 10pm.

• **DANCING AT LUGHNASA**: Brian Friel's Oliver Award-winning memory-play, set in 1930s Donegal, returns with a new cast. Gielgud (071-454 2076) Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mats Wed, 8pm, 9pm, 10pm.

• **DYLAN THOMAS: RETURN JOURNEY**: Bob Kingman's spell-binding portrayal of Dylan giving us the words. Lyric Stage, W1 (081-741 2311). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Wed, 2.45pm, 3.30pm, Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, Final week.

• **ELECTRA**: Fiona Shaw's gripping performance, ferociously self-pitying and vengeful, in Deborah Warner's first-class production. Riverfront, Crayford, Crayford, W6 (081-749 3200) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, Final week.

• **AN EVENING WITH GARY LINEKER**: Sometimes drab look at the tentacles of a woman married to a soccer nut. Duke of Cambridge, Street, London WC2 (071-454 2076) Mon-Sat, 8pm, Fri, Sat, 8pm and 8.30pm, 10pm.

• **GOOD GOD MISS MOLLY**: Cheeky intros through Fifities and Sixties hits: fizzy but not matter. Arts, Great Newport Street, WC2 (071-835 2132) Mon-Thurs, 8pm, Fri, Sat, 8pm and 8.30pm, 10.30pm, Final week.

• **THE GREAT PRETENDERS**: The most hammy of the hammy: Dennis Arden's amateurish acting in *Lope de Vega's* moral comedy. Brilliantly played. Gate, Prince Albert Pub, 11 Pimlico Road, W1 (071-229 0706) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, 8.30pm, 10.30pm.

• **JACK AND THE BEANSTALK**: Goliath's son, who is as irreverent as Cilla Black, with Tudor Davies a grand dame. Piccadilly, Denmark Street, W1 (071-730 0000)

• **ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET**: The company, with its new Nutcracker, continues to improve. At the South Bank. Choreographer Ben Stevenson has based this version on his Houston production, following Hoffmann's traditional story and aiming it appeal to a younger audience. The attractive new designs are by Desmond Healey. In today's matinee performance Ludmila Semenyaka dances the Sugar Plum Fairy, opposite Carolyn Sherrill as the Queen. Renata Calleido dances the Snow Queen. In the evening performance, the Estonian couple of Agnes Oaks and Thomas Eder make their cast, along with Robert Lloyd as the King. English National Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-922 8800), 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

• **LEON GOLUB**: The American Leon Golub is one of the few fundamentally representational artists who has, throughout the ascendancy of the Abstract, maintained the support of the art world. Probably this has something to do with the strong political message his work usually carries. But disapproval of tyranny and torture in itself would not

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and where indicated with the symbol (●) on release across the country.

Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) Camcon: Fulham Road (071-370 2836) Oxford Street (071-638 0310) MGM Threadneedle (071-634 0021) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **THE PEOPLE UNDER THE STARS** (18) Ghetto borglars penetrate their evil landlord's house. Lively mix of new Grimm fairy story, and social satire from the same team that made *Starring Brandon Adams*, Everett McGill, Wendy Robie.

Cannon Fulham Road (071-370 2836) Odeon: Knightsbridge (071-370 2836) Empire (071-497 9999) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **THE COMMITMENTS** (15) Hard-boiled Dublin youngsters form a soul band. Fresh, funny, and buoyantly played by a largely amateur cast. Directed by John Carney. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) Cannon: Chelsea (071-352 5096) Shaftesbury Avenue (071-938 8851) Odeon: Kentish Town (071-94685) Marlowe (0291 615852) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **FLURT** (12) Step to maturity at segregated Aussie boarding school. Directed by John Schlesinger. Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) Cannon: Chelsea (071-352 5096) Shaftesbury Avenue (071-938 8851) Odeon: Kentish Town (071-94685) Marlowe (0291 615852) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **DANCES WITH WOLVES** (12) Kevin Costner in the noble Sioux return; but this time the film feels almost four hours, thanks to too many scenes from the cutting room floor. An unconvincing tale. Odeon: Haymarket (0428 915353)

• **DEAD AGAIN** (15) An LA acasser from the Far East returns to haunt Kenneth Branagh and Emma Thompson. Nonsensical, over-the-top suspense thriller. Cannon: Fulham Road (071-370 2836) Empire (071-497 9999) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **EDWARD II** (18) Riveting reworking of Marlowe's play by Derek Jarman; words and images leap out at the viewer. Steven Waddington and Antonio Banderas as the royal lovers. Tilda Swinton as an exasperated Queen. Cannon: Piccadilly (071-437 3561)

• **ENCHANTED APRIL** (U) Four Englishwomen share an Italian villa in the 1930s' witty times. Fine performances, comic entertainment. Starring Miranda Richardson, Isla

Pemberton, Julie Lawrence; director, Mike Newell. Curzon West End (071-439 4805). ● **THE FISHER KING** (15) Jeff Bridges and Robin Williams as two lost souls from the myths of time up against modern-day Wayward, once a Terry Gilliam film with dried moments. Cannon: Tottenham Court Road (071-370 2836) Group: Old Vic (026 915853) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **HOT SHOTS!** (12) Soap comedy from the Apaches. Jim Abbott, with Charlie Sheen, Lloyd Bridges, and far too good jokes. Cannon: Baker Street (071-938 8851) Whitesleys (071-938 8851) Marlowe (0291 615852) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **DEAD AGAIN** (15) An LA acasser from the Far East returns to haunt Kenneth Branagh and Emma Thompson. Nonsensical, over-the-top suspense thriller. Cannon: Fulham Road (071-370 2836) Empire (071-497 9999) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **THE RESCUERS DOWN UNDER** (U) The star mice from Disney's 1977 *The Rescuers* return to rescue a kidnapped baby. A kooky cartoon feature for the ears pleased. Directed, Herbie Burton. Gary Gabriel. Cannon: Chelsea (071-352 5096) Whitesleys (071-938 8851) Marlowe (0291 615852) Whitesleys (071-769 3332)

• **THE STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE**: Roger Allam, Simon Russell Beale play after ages, but still enjoyably. Cannon: Barbican, Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 8891). Today, 2pm and 7.30pm. 157mins. Final performances.

• **A SWELL PARTY**: Four singers, two pianists in likable tribute to Cole Porter's off-the-wall melodies. Victoria (071-938 8891). Mon-Thurs, 8pm. Fri, Sat, 8.30pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm. 140mins.

• **TARTUFFE**: Paul Eddington, others, John Sessions come, Felicity Kendal hold in a rarely successful Molière. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (071-938 5303). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat Wed, Sat, 8pm. 135mins.

• **THE MYSTERIES OF MARIA MARTINEZ**: Maria Martinez's enthralling detective comedy recognises a famous Victorian murder case. Warehouse, Dingwall Road, East Croydon (081-880 4060); Tues Sat, 8pm. 135mins.

• **ONCE A CATHOLIC**: Welcome return of Ruth O'Neal. A romping comedy centred around growing up between nuns and teddy boys. Tricycle, 269 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (071-938 1000). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm. 135mins.

• **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**: The original West End's older than the new. Directed by Trevor Nunn. The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-938 5303). Mon-Thurs, 8pm. Fri, Sat, 8.30pm, mat Wed, 2.30pm. Final week.

• **THE REVENGERS' COMEDIES**: Alan Ayckbourn's ambitious, two-part comedy centred around the misadventures of Griff Rhys Jones and Les Williams. Less fun than one might hope, but the winsome. Strand, Strand, WC2 (071-240 0300). Mon-Fri, 8pm. Sat, 8.30pm. Final week.

• **THE NUTCRACKER**: Linda Emond, Alan Ayckbourn's two-part comedy centred around the misadventures of Griff Rhys Jones and Les Williams. Less fun than one might hope, but the winsome. Strand, Strand, WC2 (071-240 0300). Mon-Fri, 8pm. Sat, 8.30pm. Final week.

• **THE NOZZE DI FIGARO**: The Royal Opera's Mozart season brings together the three works da Ponte abhors. The Figaro cast features Dame Judi Dench and Sir Bryn Terfel. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-938 5303). Mon-Thurs, 8pm. Fri, Sat, 8.30pm. 155mins. Final week.

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• **THE WOMAN IN BLACK**: Linda Emond, Alan Ayckbourn's two-part comedy centred around the misadventures of Griff Rhys Jones and Les Williams. Less fun than one might hope, but the winsome. Strand, Strand, WC2 (071-240 0300). Mon-Fri, 8pm. Sat, 8.30pm. Final week.

• **THE RIDE DOWN MT MORGAN**: Arthur Miller's disappointingly one-

act play where Tom Conti argues the case for bigamy. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-817 687 0211). Tues-Sat, 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

• **THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE**: You like Narnia or you don't: if you do, the production is abrassively clear and clean. Marlowe, Finsbury Dock, EC4 (071-410 0000). Mon-Sat, 8pm and 8.30pm.

• **THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL**: The original West End's older than the new. Directed by Bryony Kimmings. Marlowe, Finsbury Dock, EC4 (071-410 0000). Mon-Sat, 8pm and 8.30pm. Final week.

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6.00 *Ceefax* (7256) 6.30 BBC Breakfast News (5078886)
6.05 *Defenders of the Earth*. Animation (7, *Ceefax*) (725111) 5.25
Why Don't You...? (684227)
10.00 News, regional news and weather (725055) 10.05 *Playdays* (6)
10.35 *Paddles Up*. The joint event of the international canoeing competition (1693665)
11.00 News, regional news and weather (2615227) 11.05 Film: *Sydney* (1955) starring Richard Farnsworth and Melissa Gilbert. Family drama about a 16-year-old Texas tomboy who dreams of training a horse for the Olympic Games. Directed by Tim Hunter (6) (6854024) 12.45 *Tom and Jerry*. A double bill of cartoons (68547163) 12.55 Regional news and weather (7259311)
12.55 *One O'Clock News* and weather (97192) 1.30 *Neighbours*. (Ceefax) (6) (6845162)
1.30 Film: *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) starring John Travolta and Karen Lynn Gorney. High-energy musical centring on Tony Manero, a disco-dancing Brooklyn youth whose love of dancing lifts him out of his working class rut. Directed by John Badham (7482266)
3.35 *Cartoon Double Bill* (6075550) 3.50 *Bruce* (8874519) 4.00 *Poorman*: *Pete and the Toy Soldiers*. Animation (423111) 4.25 *Touche Turde*. Cartoon (6) (5070005) 4.30 Not the End of the World. Episode one of a two-part drama set in Victorian England (1) (989192)
4.55 *Newsworld* (4575255) 5.05 *Blue Peter*. Includes the latest news of the programme's Golden Age (6, *Ceefax*) (6143045)
5.35 *Neighbours* (1). (Ceefax) (6) (759555) Northern Ireland: Inside Weather (79)
5.00 *Six O'Clock News* with Andrew Harvey and Jill Dando. (Ceefax) (79)
5.30 *Regional News Magazines* (31) Northern Ireland: Neighbours 7.00 Top of the Pop (6) (7453)
7.30 *EastEnders*. (Ceefax) (6) (43)
8.00 *Last of the Summer Wine*. Roy Clarke's evergreen comedy series about a trio of ancient Yorkshiremen starring Bill Owen, Peter Sallis and Brian Wilde. A rain begins with the return of Foggy to the fold after a period of absence (Ceefax) (6111)
8.30 *The Brittas Empire*. The first of a new series of the comedy by Richard Feggan and Andrew Norris starring Chris Barrie as the enthusiastic young manager of a leisure-centre. The word gets round that Brittas is dead and not everybody is broken-hearted. Indeed, his wife plans to marry a man she met at his funeral. (Ceefax) (6) (218)
9.00 *Nine O'Clock News* with Michael Buerk. (Ceefax) Regional news and weather (5840)
9.30 *Canned Carrot*. The last in Jasper Carrott's series of comedy sketches and wry observations. (Ceefax) (6) (55043)



Loose or liberated? Jodie Foster as Sarah Tobias (10.00pm)

10.00 Film: *The Accused* (1988). CHOICE: Jodie Foster was a deserved Oscar winner for a tough and brave performance in a film that is dramatically gripping while treating sensational material in a responsible way. Foster plays a victim of gang rape who takes her assailants to court but gives the defence enough ammunition to sustain the familiar counter-charge that she 'asked for it'. Kelly McGillis is Foster's lawyer, a middle-class liberal who is forced to settle for lesser charges but stones by pursuing the case from another angle. Based on a true incident, *The Accused* invites sympathy for the Foster character while raising pertinent questions about the nature of the legal process and a society infused with male prejudice. The director, Jonathan Kaplan, cut his teeth on exploitation films for Roger Corman. In *The Accused* he is careful not to be exploitative, although he has been criticised for portraying the rape itself so explicitly. (Ceefax) (6) (98531)
11.50 Film: *U2 — Rattle and Hum*. (1988, colour, and b/w). A documentary account of the rock group U2's 1987 world tour, with a contribution from rhythm and blues star BB King. Directed by Phil Jousou (449555) 1.25am Weather (6741574)

ENTERTAINMENT

ANGLIA As London except: 6.35pm-7.00 *Anglia News* (792292)

BORDER As London except: 3.50 Film: Disney's *Justin Case* (64735) 5.10-6.40 Home and Away (47) 6.50-7.00 *Blockbusters* (27)

CENTRAL As London except: 6.35pm-7.00 *Central News* (792282)

GRANADA As London except: 6.30pm-7.00 *Granada Tonight* (27)

HTV WEST As London except: 8.00pm *HTV News* (47) 6.30-7.00 Home and Away (27)

HTV WALES As HTV West except: 8.00pm-8.30 Wales at Six

TSW As London except: 8.00pm *TSW Today* (47) 6.30-7.00 *Blockbusters* (27)

TV5 As London except: 3.50 Film: Disney's

Justin Case (64735) 5.10-6.40 Home and Away (47) 6.50-7.00 *Blockbusters* (27)

TYNE TEES As London except: 8.00pm Northern Lite (47) 8.30-7.00 Home and Away (27)

ULSTER As London except: 8.00pm *Six Tonight* (47) 8.30-9.00 Home and Away (27)

YORKSHIRE As London except: 3.50 Film: Disney's *Justin Case* (64735) 5.10-6.40 Home and Away (47) 6.50-7.00 *Blockbusters* (27)

S4C Starts: 6.00am C4 Daily (685304) 8.25 *Second Chance* (685305) 8.30 *Shirtless and Barefoot* (685306) 8.45 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 11.55 *The Lighthouse* (603055) 12.20 *Mr Royal Blue* (Car) (2817725) 12.35 *Star Meltdown* (611540) 1.10 *Holy Spots* (60622) 1.30 *Braveheart* (605250) 2.20 *It's a Hard Life* (605251) 2.35 *The Assassins* (607482) 6.01 *Six One* (605416) 8.30 1991 — *A View of War* (6054269) 7.00 *Top of the Pop* (6019579) 7.30 *A Little Violence* (605704) 8.15 *MacGyver* (402944) 8.30 *Home and Away* (47) 8.45 *Family Ties* (6022501) 10.55 *Grand Marnier* (6022522) 11.40 *Celebration* (603095) 12.15am *Weather* (3483861)

NETWORK 2

Starts: 9.05am *Bravo* (5844355) 10.25 *The Troublesome 23* (6853326) 10.40 *Flash the Sheek Dog* (7479787) 11.40 *The 10th International Circus Festival of Monte Carlo* (7480145) 11.55 *Shirtless and Barefoot* (685306) 12.25 *Ring Leader* (7480146) 1.15 *The Return of Dr Who* (7480147) 1.30 *Braveheart* (605250) 2.25 *Ring Leader* (7480148) 2.45 *Star Meltdown* (611540) 4.25 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 4.45 *Shirtless and Barefoot* (685306) 5.00 *It's a Hard Life* (605251) 5.15 *Home and Away* (47) 5.30 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 5.45 *Shirtless and Barefoot* (685306) 5.55 *It's a Hard Life* (605251) 6.00 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 6.15 *Home and Away* (47) 6.30 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 6.45 *Shirtless and Barefoot* (685306) 6.55 *It's a Hard Life* (605251) 7.00 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 7.15 *Home and Away* (47) 7.30 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 7.45 *Shirtless and Barefoot* (685306) 7.55 *It's a Hard Life* (605251) 8.00 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 8.15 *Home and Away* (47) 8.30 *Sex and Fury* (685307) 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197mph wind lashes Britain

By KERRY GILL

A GUST of 197mph was reported in the North Sea yesterday as hurricane-force winds battered much of Scotland and the northern Isles. The gust, described by the Aberdeen coastguard as exceptional, was recorded on the Brent Alpha oil platform, about 100 miles north-east of Shetland.

Winds exceeding 140mph imperilled shipping and oil installations, and gusts of more than 100mph damaged roofs, smashed windows and wrecked caravans on Shetland, and left roads blocked by fallen trees in northern and central Scotland.

One vessel, the Veesea Sapphire, drifted north of Shetland for almost four hours before the 12-man crew managed to restart her engines after she was left without power when a huge wave hit her wheelhouse. Conditions, described as atrocious, foiled an attempt to winch the crew off the oil supply vessel. Once power was regained, and the vessel limped towards Bergen, Norway, under escort.

A coastguard spokesman at Lerwick, Shetland, said: "Without engine power, you cannot turn round into the wind, so you are at the mercy of the elements. There was a vicious sea out there at the time and potentially it was very serious."

A 65,000-tonne oil tanker, Noga, had to ride out a hurricane force 12 wind, 14 miles east of Shetland.

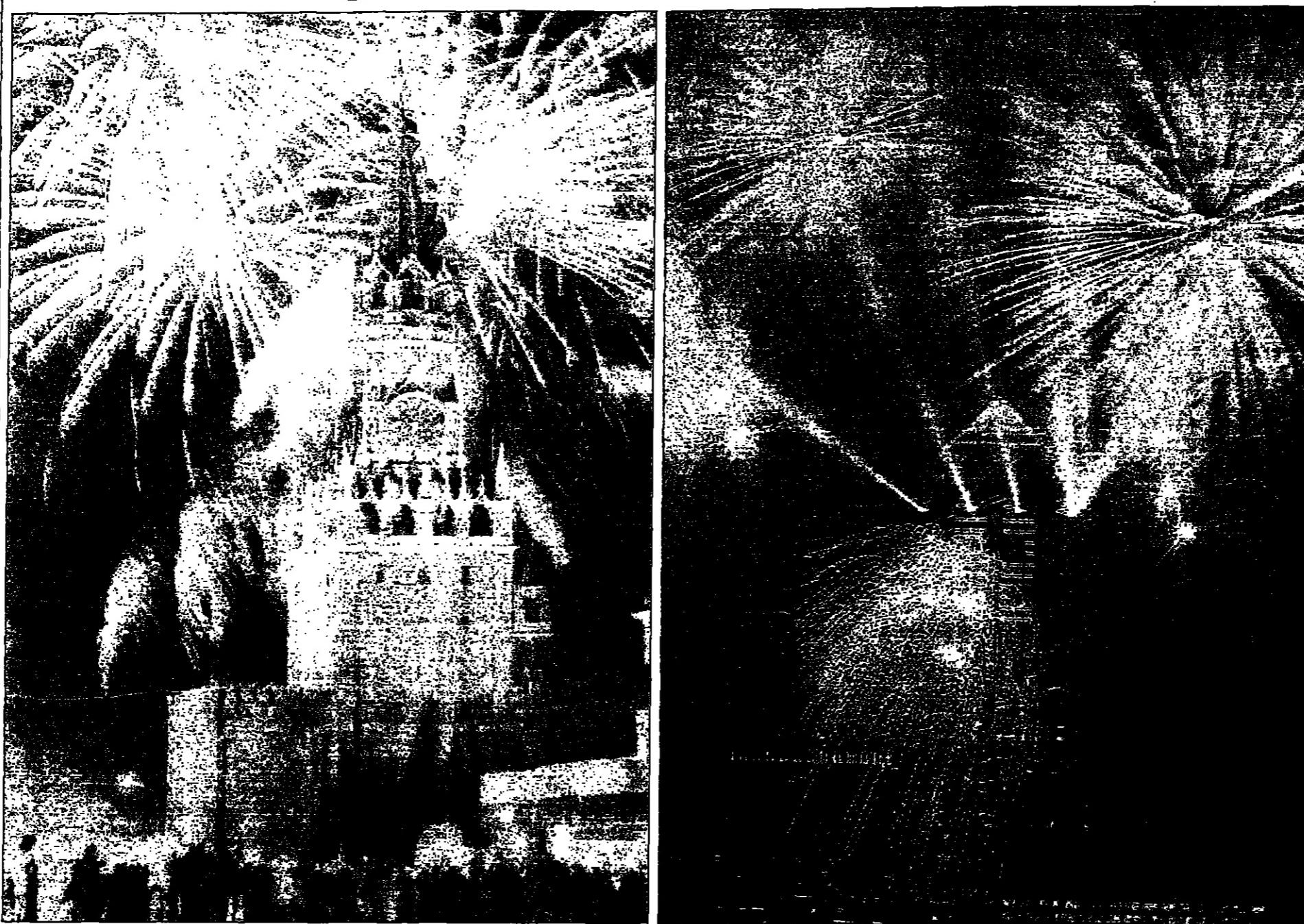
The worst-affected area was east of Shetland, where the Brent Delta oil installation recorded a 197mph gust, according to the coastguard. Westerly gales, often reaching 140mph, ripped through the oilfields before subsiding. "It was very short-lived, but extremely ferocious," the Aberdeen coastguard said.

Rigs lost anchor cables and lifelines, and supply vessels were battered by mountainous waves. At RAF Saya Vord, on the Shetland island of Unst, radio aerials were blown down. Although buildings on the Shetland islands were built to resist high winds, there was widespread structural damage.

Police and firefighters evacuated a 20-caravan site on Shetland. Caravans at the Annesbrae site, Lerwick, were flattened by the wind.

**Forecast, page 18
Snow Report, page 24**

Fireworks greet 1992 in Moscow and London



Lighting up the new year: fireworks sparkle over the Kremlin, left, while laser lights join the foghorn-and-firework celebrations over Canary Wharf in London

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

TO the thousands of policemen who saw in the new year on duty around Britain, it was "just like a normal Saturday night". There were, of course, hundreds of arrests to be made, injuries to attend to, fights to break up, burglaries to investigate and even a distantly embarrassed Royal Marine, dressed up in women's clothes, to rescue from his over-turned car.

Most police forces reckoned, however, that the celebrations had gone off comparatively peacefully. It was certainly quieter in Britain than in the Philippines, for example, where 11 people died in fights in Manila and 1,300 people were wounded, mainly by bullets fired at random into the air as a way of celebration.

In Moscow, fireworks lit up the first sky as Russians celebrated the first new year since 1917 without a red flag flying over the Kremlin. Die-hard communists tried to dampen

the spirits of the revellers, but they were drowned out by the fireworks and the popping of champagne corks. In Trafalgar Square, 157 people were arrested, including 40 for drunkenness and 54 for causing public disorder. Eight were charged with having offensive weapons and five with assault. Other arrests were for robbery, drug offences, criminal damage and indecent exposure.

In Manchester, police reported a calm night, and in the West Midlands a relieved and rather surprised senior officer said that it had actually been "quite enjoyable".

Police in Worthing and Tunbridge Wells — towns whose image is generally one of such tranquillity — had to deal with scuffling groups

of youths and partygoers, and throughout the West Country there were minor scuffles, arrests and some injuries. Forty-eight people were arrested in Gloucestershire and 22 in Swindon in the three hours after midnight. Thieves broke into dozens of houses in Bristol while the owners were at parties.

Police at Thatcham in Berkshire had stones thrown at them as they tried to arrest a man, and there were fights in Henley-on-Thames, Reading, Milton Keynes and Scarborough. A police officer in Ruthin, north Wales, needed 80 stitches after being thrown through a plate-glass window.

A young driver knocked down a man and three women as they walked along a pavement in Col-

chester, Essex. The man and two of the women suffered broken legs. The car, which smashed into a number of others, finally came to a stop and the driver, whom police said had been drinking, was arrested.

A mother and her young son died when their car plunged into a river at Willington, near Cambridge, on their way to a party. The car driver, a family friend, was trapped in the car and died as it sank in deep water. The body of the four-year-old boy was spotted after having been thrown clear of the submerged wreckage.

A man aged 52 died in house fire from which a second man escaped. Police are treating it as arson.

A man aged 45 was found dead in

suspicious circumstances in Crewe, Cheshire. A teenager fell into the River Hull in Humberside while walking home with a group of friends. One tried to save him, but had to be rescued himself. Despite a search by an RAF helicopter, the missing youth had still not been found by last night.

It was otherwise a generally quiet new year, lit up partly by the red cheeks of the Royal Marine, who was taken to Poole General Hospital, Dorset, wearing according to a straight-faced policeman, a mauve skirt and white top.

He joined another victim of Dorset-style celebrations: a 40-year-old man dressed as a fairy, complete with tutu and wand, who simply "fell down in the street".

If all happened as Jonathan Hayley was making his appearance — at precisely one second past midnight — to become Britain's first baby of 1992.

Shares rise, page 28

Major backs Lamont

Continued from page 1
such a step would be ill advised and could force up base rates. He suggested that they might be five points higher if Britain was not a member of the European exchange-rate mechanism.

Independent forecasters are hardly revising downwards their growth projections for this year. The prime minister's acceptance that the chancellor's forecast of 2.25 per cent growth this year, made as recently as November's autumn statement, will not be realised will be viewed by Conservatives as confirmation that they will go into an election with few signs of an upturn and on the promise of better things to come.

Now that the prime minister and the chancellor have explicitly ruled out short-term measures to revive the economy, most Tories will be pinning their hopes on a tax-cutting budget to provide the springboard for an election victory. They will be looking for a penny off the basic rate of tax and, after Mr Major's latest hint, a big increase in the £140,000 threshold for inheritance tax.

**Russia and Europe, page 2
Letters, page 13
Shares rise, page 28**

Royal work increases

Continued from page 1
sury would have raised £7 million a year.

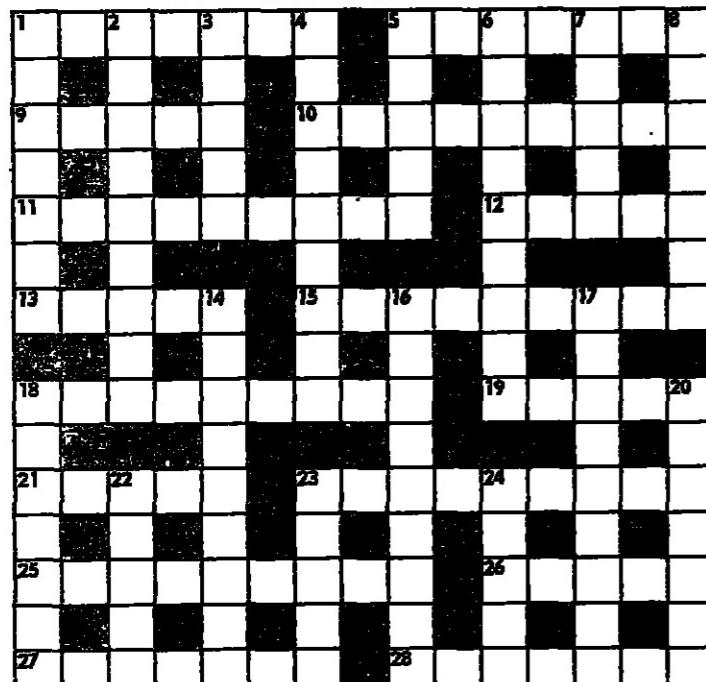
Although the Queen is technically unpaid, she receives £7.9 million from the Civil List. The other seven recipients receive £1.88 million a year between them. The Queen gives a return of more than £13,000 per engagement if the crude mathematical formula is applied, the Princess Royal just over £300 per engagement. Prince Edward almost £400.

The roll call of royal endeavour is the brainchild of Tim O'Donovan, aged 59, an insurance broker from Datchet, Berkshire. He spends about four hours a week combing through the royal engagements reported in *The Times* Court Circular, and the itineraries of tours abroad.

So in demand from both media and public is his work that Buckingham Palace press relations staff regularly refer enquires to him. He started clocking up the royal workload in 1979.

Shares rise, page 28

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 18,804



WORD WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which definitions are correct?

By Philip Howard

BOLIDE

a. Asteroid
b. An astronomical idea
c. A large meteor

TORII

a. Roman bull-fighters
b. A Shinto temple gateway

POSTER

a. Thick home-made whiskey
b. Greatest made from sheepskin

SCIAMACHY

a. Useless fighting
b. A type of curtain
c. Rule by religious leaders

Answers on page 16

AA ROADWATCH

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London & SE

C London (with N & S Circs) 731
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M-ways/rads M1-Cartford T 732
M-ways/rads Dartford T-M23 734
M-ways/rads M23-M4 735
M25 London Orbital only 736
National 737
National motorways 738
West Country 739
Midlands 740
East Anglia 741
North-west England 742
Northeast England 743
Scotland 744
Northern Ireland 745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 36p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

GLASGOW

Yesterday: Temp: max 6 am to 6 pm, 11C (32F); min 6 pm to 6 am, 7C (45F). Rain: 24h to 6 pm, nil. Sun: 24 h to 6 pm, 1.0 hr.

Concise Crossword, page 15

Northern Ireland and northern and western Scotland will be cloudy with rain, heavy at times, but there may be clearer spells in the far north this afternoon and this evening. Wales and western England will be cloudy with light rain or drizzle, mainly on coasts and hills. Further east, brighter spells are likely. All areas will be windy, with gales in the north and the west, but it will still feel mild. Outlook: turning colder in the north. Most areas will see some rain.

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Bank

Bank Buys 701

Bank Sales 702

Bankers 703

Bankers 704

Bankers 705

Bankers 706

Bankers 707

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THURSDAY JANUARY 2 1992

19

Leeds United take over at top of first division as championship rivals suffer their heaviest home defeat for 14 years

Bailey treble halts shabby United

Manchester United 1
Queen's Park Rangers 4
By STUART JONES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

ALEX Ferguson, worried that Manchester United might lose concentration in between the three meetings with Leeds United, yesterday watched his worst fears realised.

A pitifully shabby impersonation of the side which had surged to the top of the first division table, they left Old Trafford surrounded by the jeers they had earned during their heaviest defeat at home for 14 years.

There could be no excuses. The lone exception amid the listlessness and carelessness was Mark Hughes. Lively and alert, he at least gave the impression that he had not indulged in excesses the night before. The rest did.

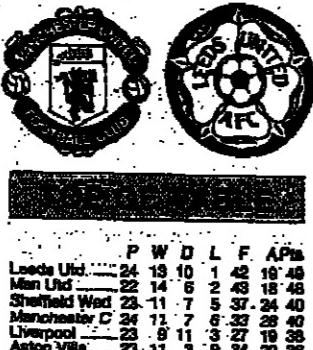
Not Queen's Park Rangers, though. Eager from the start, they took an early two-goal lead and might have added two or three more before assuring themselves of being the first visitors to win at Old Trafford since Everton in March last year.

Ferguson, United's manager, made no attempt to disguise his side's deficiencies. "We never started," he said. "It was like a nightmare. We were totally out-played. But I am sure that this will be a one-off."

United were aware that they had to win to regain the leadership from Leeds, who had won earlier at West Ham. In an attempt to refresh his line-up, Ferguson introduced Lee Sharpe after an absence of seven months and rested Ryan Giggs. Andrei Kanchelski, victim of influenza, was replaced by Mike Phelan.

Previously beaten only once this season, United opened as though in a collective daze. As though strolling around in the heady air of complacency. The most resolute defence in the first division immediately disintegrated and was pierced twice within five minutes with an ease which defied belief.

Clayton Blackmore, who



	P	W	D	L	F	A/Pm
Leeds Utd	24	13	10	1	42	18/48
Man Utd	24	12	11	1	39	20/48
Sheffield Wed	24	11	7	5	37	24/48
Manchester C	24	11	7	6	32	29/40
Liverpool	23	10	3	2	29	19/38
Aston Villa	23	11	3	9	34	25/38

had been brought in to cover for the injured Denis Irwin, was especially to blame for the alarming lack of discipline which spread among his colleagues. Together, they offered Peter Schmeichel firm protection.

Rangers, resurgent since the return of Ray Wilkins, had built sufficient belief during their own unbeaten sequence of half a dozen games that they readily accepted United's wide spread invitations. Dennis Bailey, especially, profited from the unexpected generosity and helped himself to three of his side's four goals.

The first, scored in the fourth minute with startling simplicity, epitomised the ragged nature of United's rearguard. With Blackmore providing no more than a token gesture of a tackle, Roy Wegerle was allowed to drift down the right flank before rolling the ball to Barker. He nudged it in, hit on to the equally unguarded Sinton, who swept it in at his own convenience.

Sinton created the second a minute later when Blackmore again was at fault. Drawn across from his left back position, he merely accompanied Bailey into the area and failed to prevent him from unleashing a shot.

United, having started at the pace of a tortoise in hibernation, could do nothing to raise their challenge and a crowd of 38,554, which had been uncharacteristically subdued before the kick-off, was reduced to virtual silence.

Groans were heard, though, when Holloway's drive narrowly evaded a bar and particularly when Bailey,



Road block: Whyte, left, beats away a close-range shot by Small, of West Ham, at Upton Park yesterday. Photograph: Ian Stewart

Leeds show their strength

West Ham United 1
Leeds United 3

By CLIVE WHITING

EXUDING the kind of professionalism that has been their hallmark since the Sixties, Leeds United summoned the strength and savvy — on a day when Howard Wilkinson, their manager, freely admitted that "something was missing" — to overtake Manchester United at Upton Park in their unending duel for the championship.

Sinton's through ball was once more permitted by the distracted Bruce, who celebrated his 31st birthday on New Year's Eve, to run to Bailey in their unending duel for the championship.

That professionalism is no longer of the negative kind that made Leeds few friends on their last visit to the east London football academy two seasons ago but of a confident, positive nature that threatens to push United all the way to the finish.

Hughes, battling typically to gain possession from Giggs' corner, provided the opening for him but Rangers soon restored their advantage.

Sinton, given the freedom of the left flank, ran on before striking the foot of the distant post. Bailey, with no one near, simply tapped in the rebound for his tenth goal of the season.

His striking partner, Wegerle, spared United further indignity by scooping over an equally glaring opportunity in the final minute.

It would have been so easy for Leeds to have dropped their guard against struggling West Ham and it was commendable, of them, too, that they managed to pull off a victory in the face of what Billy Bonds, the West Ham manager, considered was his team's most spirited performance of late.

There have not been too many of those during a run in which they have gathered just one point in a possible 21 to find themselves well and truly entrenched in the relegation zone.

West Ham's defensive vulnerability was there for all to see after just 11 minutes when, having recklessly conceded a free kick, courtesy of Dicks's wild tackle on Wallace, they failed lamentably to pick up players at either end of the free kick.

Strachan and McAllister were permitted to work an overlap and, from the latter's cross, Chapman headed in off a post.

Had this been earlier in the season, when referees were exercising the Fila edict on professional fouls, Leeds might have surrendered more than their lead in the 23rd minute.

Dorigo, having outpaced Keen from a through ball from McAvinnie, underhit his backpass to Lukic and then deliberately pushed the West Ham player to prevent

him from gaining an advantage.

Ron Groves, the referee, chose not to book the England player but appeased the West Ham supporters with a penalty award, from which Dicks scored emphatically.

The first of several breathtaking saves by Lukic kept Leeds deservedly in the game, as he palmed away a vicious, swerving drive by Bishop, before McAllister strode on to a headed pass by Chapman to strike a shot of stunning velocity with effortless timing past Mikosko.

Lukic frustrated the opposition when tipping over the crossbar a dangerously mis-hit downward header from Small, and saving at point-blank range in quick succession from Bishop and Brecker, but, with five minutes remaining, Chapman assured Leeds of their victory when he sidefooted home a cross from Wallace at the far post for his eleventh goal of the season.

WEST HAM UNITED: L. Mikosko; T. Brooker, J. Dicks, A. Gole, S. Potts, M. Thomas, J. Bishop, F. McAvinnie, M. Small (sub: A. Morley), K. Keen, S. Sleath.

LEEDS UNITED: J. Lukic; M. Sterland, A. Dorigo, D. Battie, C. Falckough, C. Whyte, G. Strachan, Rodney Wallace, L. Chapman, G. McAllister, G. Speed. Referee: R. Groves.

Luton's climb gathers pace

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

LUTON Town's festive revival continued with a 1-1 draw away to Nottingham Forest yesterday, giving them seven points from three games and lifting them out of the bottom three in the first division.

David Pleat, the Luton manager, must have been counting on a maximum nine points — after previous wins over Chelsea and Arsenal — with a minute remaining at the City Ground.

Pembroke had given his side the lead after 33 seconds, earning himself a magnum of champagne for the quickest new year goal, but Walker, the Nottingham Forest and England central defender, popped up with a sparkling goal, too, in the last minute — his first for the club in over 300 appearances. So pleased was his manager, Brian Clough, that he planted a kiss on Walker's cheek at the end.

There was no joy for Southampton. Now bottom of the table, despite an unexpected 3-3 draw against Leeds United on Boxing Day, they slipped to their sixth defeat at The Dell this season, 2-1 against Everton.

An 89th-minute goal by Adams was scant consolation after Ward and Beardsey had given Everton the lead midway through the second half.

Aston Villa's aspirations of challenging Leeds and Manchester United at the top — always little more than a pipedream — was again exposed in a 2-1 defeat at Norwich.

Although buoyant after Christmas wins over West Ham and Southampton, and further inspired by Regis's equaliser cancelling out Fleck's twice-taken penalty, Aston Villa bowed to a 78th-minute winner from Ullahorne.

Crystal Palace will feel a good deal happier. After mediocre 1-1 away draws with Wimbledon and Sheffield United, Gabbaldoni pounced in the seventh minute to clinch a 1-0 victory over Notts County, who are still hovering on the brink of a swift return to the second division.

Rovers return, page 20
Cavalier Oldham, page 21

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Catering changes will cheer racegoers

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

RACEGOERS at Royal Windsor and Cheltenham received a very welcome and unexpected 1992 pick-me-up yesterday when one of Britain's largest racecourse caterers announced price cuts of up to 30 per cent across the board.

The surprise decision by Lethaby and Christopher to reduce the cost of food and drink ranging from sandwiches to champagne will apply at the 14 courses where the Wokingham-based company operates, including Ascot, Newmarket, Chester and Aintree.

The reductions, combined with a pledge to improve quality, comes after years of criticism about the standard of racecourse food, especially from regulars in Tattersalls and the Silver Ring. A survey conducted by the Racecourse

Association last year disclosed that only a third of punters were pleased with the cuisine on offer at Britain's 59 tracks.

Tim Stonhill, Lethaby and Christopher's area operations manager, said at Windsor yesterday: "We accept that racecourse catering has not always been as good as it should have been and we have been slammed for it in the past. We are not going to be slammed for it in future."

He added: "We have spent three to five years concentrating on hospitality and corporate boxes which we think we have got right, but our minds have not been on the prime core of the business, which is the general public. Public catering is 20 per cent of our business but creates 90 per cent of our problems. The way forward for 1992 is value for money, quality and service."

The caterers have left nothing to chance in improving basic snacks, including sandwiches. Stonhill explained:

"The benchmark in sandwiches is provided by Marks and Spencer."

"We bought 400 from various stores and took them to bits to analyse what was inside. We looked to see how much butter they used, whether the mayonnaise was real and so on. Our people are now making sandwiches to that benchmark, so the quality has improved."

The most expensive sandwiches now cost £2, a reduction of 80p, while the cheapest are £1.15 less than the old prices. The price cuts will cost Lethaby and Christopher £250,000. Their profits of £650,000 last year came from racecourse catering turnover of £20 million.

Tea is staying at the same price while coffee is being increased by 5p but the quantity is increasing by 50 per cent and better cups are being used.

The price of hot savoury pies is being reduced by 20 per cent and branded makes are being offered instead of poorer quality products. Danish pastries and doughnuts are larger but cost 50p compared to 80p.

Cans of beer, lager, cider and Guinness cost about 25p less each while Lanson Black Label and Mumm Cordon Rouge champagne are about £2 a bottle cheaper. Beefburgers and steak sandwiches are also costing less.



Stonhill: frank action

to reduce their prices.

The reduction in tariffs has not come before time and coincides with the effects of the recession on the punters' pocket. Nevertheless, it is a courageous move by such a large company to admit it has not been giving the consumer value for money and to take active steps to try to improve the deal on offer.

"If we didn't do something to help punters on racecourses we faced going down the slippery slope. Not just us, but everyone involved with racing."

"By dropping our prices, improving quality and service we hope to please existing racecourse customers and attract new ones, thereby increasing the volume of our sales," Stonhill added.

Meanwhile, Royal Windsor announced yesterday that it was spending £400,000 on building 12 private viewing boxes.

Mellor triumph, page 22
Racing results, page 23

YACHTING

New round Britain race to test the best

BY BARRY PICKTHALL

THIRTY skippers, including Robin Knox-Johnston, will contest a new round Britain race for fully crewed yachts, which is due to start from Cowes on August 8.

The race, organised by the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) and sponsored by Teeside Development Corporation, is the first such event since 1976, when Knox-Johnston was in the crew aboard Alan Morgan's record-setting yacht, *More Opposition*.

Her average speed for the 1,890-mile voyage was a modest 6.82 knots, which should prove an easy hurdle to overcome for many of the larger yachts entered this year.

The former solo round the world yachtsman plans to defend the record by renewing his partnership with Bob Fisher aboard the 45ft *Baracuda* of Tarrant, which the pair sailed with distinction in the last two-man round Britain race four years ago.

The course takes the fleet out into the Western Approaches on a 340-mile leg to Cork in Ireland, where crews take a compulsory break before embarking on the 830-mile second stage to Lerwick. The fleet then sails 330 miles

south to Hartlepool, with a final 360-mile stage back to Cowes.

The Hartlepool Renaissance race is open to Channel handicap and IIMS-measured yachts as well as waterbasted Whitbread and BOC racers, which will compete in a separate class. Records apart, competing crews have the added incentive of £500 travel grants from the organisers to cover crew changes at the three ports.

□ The disappointing entry for the Southern Cross Cup series in Australia last week has led the RORC to reconsider its choice of classes for the Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup series in 1993.

The RORC announced last month that they would retain the One Ton, Two Ton and 50ft classes for the British series but, at the London Boat Show yesterday, Alan Green, the club's race director, warned that it could change if owners fail to confirm their entries in sufficient numbers by the end of March. "We are looking for a minimum of ten three-boat teams," he said.

□ The Royal Yachting Association is to continue funding the national match-race championships after failing to tempt a sponsor to back the series.

Australia edge ahead

Sydney: Australia took a two-point lead over Ireland at the end of the first leg of the four-leg World Cup of Ocean Racing series, organisers said yesterday.

Australia have 101 points after the opening leg which combined the Southern Cross Cup and Asia Pacific Championships, finishing with this week's Sydney-Hobart race.

The Irish claimed handcap honours on Monday in

MOTOR RALLYING

Rally escorted after attacks

and the sand storms. Now, we're facing a tense political situation," Gilbert Sabine, the rally director, told competitors.

At dawn yesterday, Sabine flew by helicopter to the Niger-Chad border to ensure that a military escort was awaiting the rally.

The escort was provided by Chad army units while French warplanes, stationed in Chad, conducted surveillance flights.

The Paris-Cape Town rally, which began on December 23, passes through ten African nations before ending on January 16. It is the successor to the Paris-Dakar rally, which began in 1979.

The Chad unrest is not the first trouble to befall the race. Sand storms have followed the competitors for several days and, last week, a pilot and mechanic were killed in a crash in Libya. (AP)

"We've dealt with the mud



Managing an armful: Terry Dolan, the Hull manager, taking training before the cup tie with Chelsea

Dolan looks on bright side

BY IAN ROSS

TERRY Dolan is a manager who believes that "something will turn up". As the man in charge of Hull City, he has seen his side slip into a position of some discomfort towards the bottom of the third division in the last few weeks. Yet he remains optimistic. Like a number of other managers of clubs from the lower echelons of the Football League, he views Saturday's FA Cup third round as a possible gateway to better things.

Hull entertain Chelsea, of the first division, on Saturday. It is a match which Dolan believes could have a profound effect on his side's inconsistent season. Should they win, for while Chelsea have a team of superior technique, it is also one that has displayed a callous disregard for its own safety in cup football in recent years.

"We are in the middle of a bad spell, and so are Chelsea, so anything at all could happen," Dolan said. "Who knows, it could end up 6-5 to either side. It is difficult to

FA CUP

talk about these sort of ties without resorting to clichés, but, it has to be said, we really do not have anything to lose because, on paper at least, there is such an enormous gulf between us and them."

It may come as something of a relief to Chelsea to learn that it is highly improbable they will find themselves embroiled in a physical battle at Boothferry Park.

"To be honest, that is probably the best way to bridge the class gap when playing against opponents from a higher division," Dolan said. "But, we could not indulge in that sort of thing even if we wanted to, because we just do not have the players capable of dishing out the physical stuff, the hard stuff."

"From what I can gather,

Notts County defeated Chel-

sea on Boxing Day by adopt-

ing a no-holds-barred approach. That may well be the way to rattle them, but we won't be trying it. Actually, we like to play football — there's another cliché for you!"

Dolan believes that Hull's recent run of poor form — yesterday's 2-2 draw at Birmingham ended a run of four consecutive League defeats — is directly attributable to the sale of Andy Payton, who joined Middlesbrough in November.

"Quite simply, he was our best player and we have not been able to replace him," he said. "Until yesterday, we have scored just four goals in seven games since he left, and won only twice, both FA Cup ties."

"When I took over at Hull, 11 months ago, I was not only fully aware of the club's financial problems but also fully aware that Payton was going to be sold to help pay off our loans and reduce our overdraft."

"We could have sold him ten times over for £500,000 but we held out for the price we wanted. I knew his time at

Wembley would be a good starting point."

"We haven't had any

breaks at all of late but they will come, I know they will.

Five minutes from the end of an FA Cup tie against Che-

lea would be a good starting point."

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Marshall made a remarkable save from Huistra but was again exposed when McCoist burst free. He dived at the Rangers forward's feet but on rolling over he caught McCoist and a penalty was awarded from which Haneley, conspicuously casual, scored.

After a breath-taking save by Goram from McStay, it was less than Celtic deserved when Brown was permitted to advance unimpeded to drive a third goal for Rangers off the base of Marshall's left hand post.

Huddlestone, unbeaten in their previous six games, started at a furious pace, creating six openings in the first 15 minutes. Barnett going closest with a fierce, angled drive inches past the far post. But then Chester drew on the strength of character which had seen them fight back from 2-0 down to draw at Fulham on Saturday.

Chasing shadows they may have been at times, but at least the chasing never

Rangers show champions' style

BY RODDY FORSYTH

WHILE Celtic may claim to be unfortunate at the outcome, Rangers confirmed at Parkhead yesterday that they possess the prime attribute of champions: the ability to repeat points without playing at peak form.

Paul McStay, of Celtic, was the outstanding player on display in a fiercely-contested game. Other expensively-rated individuals struggled in the same department. Mikhailechenko and McCullum, to take the most obvious examples, were confounded by the pace of the contest and had to be replaced.

Gordon was similarly bemused for lengthy spells but McStay, whose pedigree includes seven of these seasonal Old Firm rituals, orchestrated

such persistent menace from midfield that for half of the contest it was easy to believe that Celtic were about to do the rest of the first division a favour and disrupt the champions' ominous run of victories.

Yet it was Rangers who set the agenda, with a racing start which muted the raucous home support. A job from McCoist and headed by Haneley, both unchallenged and both narrowly off target, indicated that the Celtic defenders were in typically hesitant mood.

Matters were not helped when Marshall dropped Mikhailechenko's corner kick and McCullum was very lucky to get away with handling a McCoist shot on the goal line.

Afterwards it was suggested in the dressing rooms that the referee had judged the offence to be unintentional but, in fact, Mr Smith was unsighted and looked to his

linesman for clarification for the incident, but his colleague was similarly ill-placed to see. This was the cue for McStay to reverse the flow of play and set up fine opportunities for Coyne and Casarino, but with half-time imminent and Celtic in charge, Rangers delivered the sucker punch.

Spackman emerged forceful from tackles by Grant and Whyte and released Gordon who, grateful at last to be allowed a channel free of lunging bodies, found Haneley. The Englishman played a diagonal ball to the far post where McCoist trimmed his shot beyond.

Celtic replied just the other side of half-time, Gough's stunlock forcing Rangers to concede a corner on the right. Mowbray met the kick with a header of javelin force to be wilder Goram.

With the contest finely bal-

anced, McStay was told by

the referee to leave the field to attend to a bleeding face wound, and in his temporary absence, Rangers turned the screw.

Marshall made a remarkable save from Huistra but was again exposed when McCoist burst free. He dived at the Rangers forward's feet but on rolling over he caught McCoist and a penalty was awarded from which Haneley, conspicuously casual, scored.

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Chasing shadows they may have been at times, but at least the chasing never

BASKETBALL

Sunderland's spirit is still alive despite their slide

BY NICHOLAS HARLING

THE world invitation club championships (WICB) got underway at Crystal Palace yesterday without its holders. Nothing unusual in that but few champions can have suffered the kind of transformation in fortunes that has been Sunderland's sad experience over the past 12 months.

Unlike the teams that are competing in the 15th annual tournament, sponsored by Russell Athletie, at the National Sports Centre, Sunderland were able to commit themselves to new year revives without too much concern for hangovers.

The decision they made three months ago not to defend their trophy was the only one they could take in the circumstances. "It was a sensible decision given the financial state of the club," David Elderkin, the Sunderland

coach and owner, said. "We couldn't put together a team to do either ourselves or the tournament justice."

Even when Peter Scantlebury was leading Scott Pater-

son, Russ Saunders, Steve Bucknall and Steve Nelson in the celebrations at Crystal Palace a year ago, Sunderland were heading for their crisis. It failed, however, to prevent the national cup from being added to the sideboard.

Now, those five players have departed, along with Clyde Vaughan, with all of them allegedly owed money by Brian Dobinson, the previ-

ous owner. Despite his promises, it has yet to materialise.

From the bottom of the Carlsberg League first divi-

sion, the team-mates they left behind will be doing their

utmost to avert a cup surprise on Saturday, leaving

Rovers return to the top thanks to Reid's late goal

Blackburn Rovers 2
Cambridge United 1

By LOUISE TAYLOR

BACK at the top of the second division they may be, but Blackburn looked anything but Premier League material at Ewood Park yesterday.

Fortune frowned on a Cambridge side reduced to ten men when Danny O'Shea was sent off for a professional foul on David Speedie after 20 minutes.

Many referees may have

reached for the yellow rather

than red card when the de-

fender tugged Speedie's shirt

after the Scot had stolen the ball from his toecap, but Paul Vanez adhered strictly to the letter of the law.

Despite this setback, it was Cambridge who conjured most of the chances.

Bobby Mimms, the Rovers

goalkeeper, went through a

whole repertoire of saves,

most notably denying Philpot with his legs, using

one hand to repel a Dublin

effort, and reacting well to

another Taylor's shot.

Taylor cost Cambridge

only £750,000 from Sudbury

Town, but the forward still

threatened to steal the show

from Kenny Dalglish's more

expensive signings.

One moment, midway

through the first half, when

he demonstrated delightful

skill to control a long which

dropped over his shoulder,

highlighted Taylor's right to

be man of the match.

Baile was not too far be-

hind. While Taylor was pos-

ing the Blackburn rearguard

all sorts of problems, the

Cambridge central defender

showed the way in terms of

marking and tackling.

So it was Hill, twice,

and Brown desperately

cleared shots off the Black-

burn line, while only wasteful

finishing by Rowett and Dub-

lin spared Rovers' blushes.

Cambridge paid for such

ATHLETICS

Evans's run is another warning to selectors

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

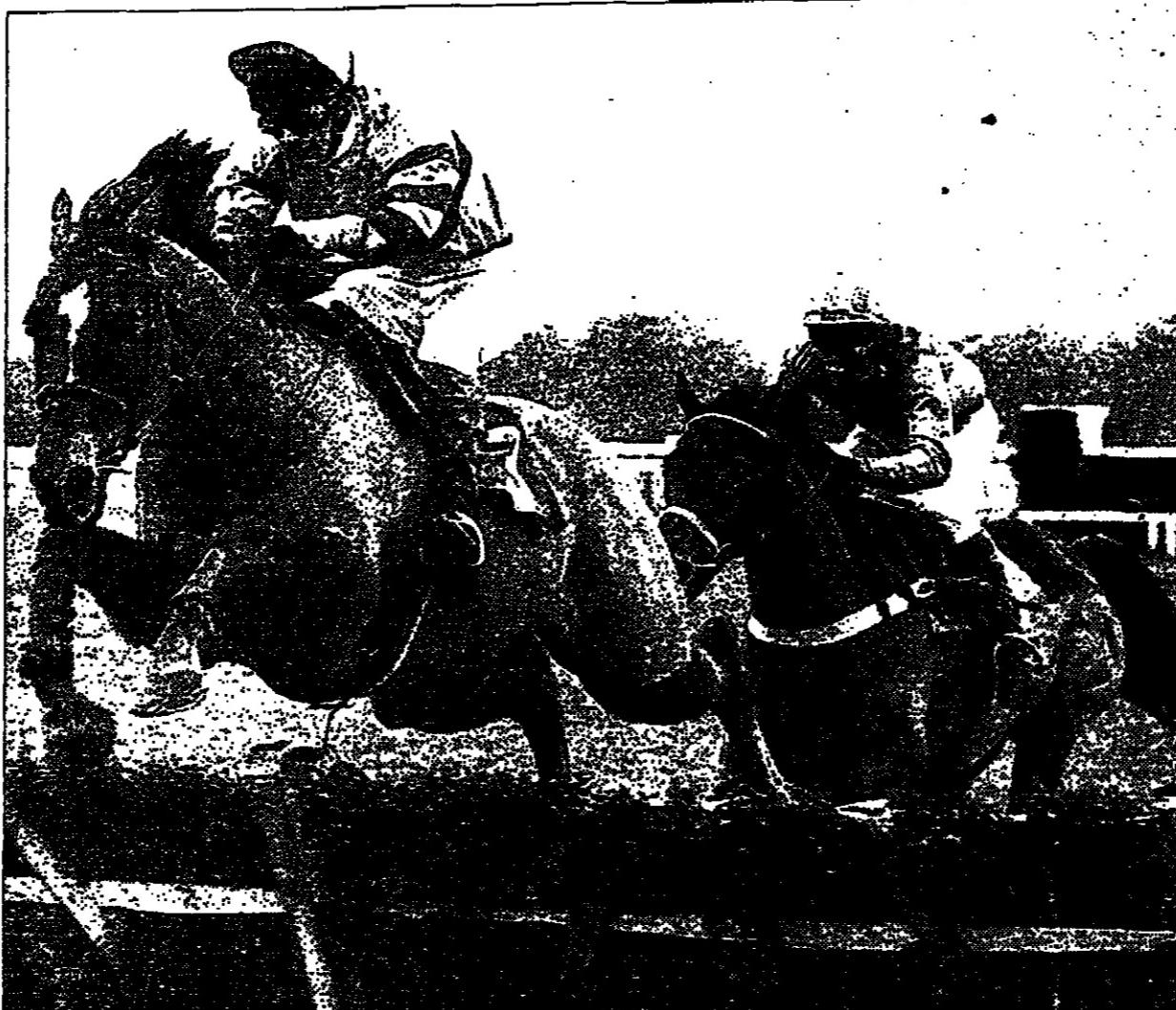
PAUL Evans, of Belgrave Harriers, yesterday provided the annual Morpeth to Newcastle road race with its first southern winner since Jim Peters took the last of his three successive victories in 1954.

Britain's selectors, therefore, will shift uneasily in their seats this weekend when Evans's name comes up at their meeting to decide which three men to choose for the Olympic marathon. Evans, by his own admission, is unlikely to be chosen, but after his victory here over one athlete who should be picked for Barcelona — Steve Brace — and another who could — Sam Carey — Evans said he would be seeking a place in the ADT London Marathon in April.

As Brace, Britain's most successful marathon runner in 1991 and surely the first name on the selectors' list for the Games, will also be racing in the capital, Evans will have a chance to lend weight to the view that it would have been wiser to wait until after the London Marathon before picking the team.

It was a clinical victory that Evans delivered yesterday. Once a lead group of five had separated from the masses, he was the only one among them not to offer himself to set the pace. But when, at 10½ miles, he went into attack, he tore the heart from the group. By 11 miles he led by 13 seconds; at 12 miles by 23 seconds. At the end of the 14½-mile point-to-point course, he was 35 seconds clear, recording 69min 35sec. Carey, Britain's highest-placed finisher in the world championship marathon in Tokyo, was second in 70:10 and Brace, winner of the Berlin Marathon in September, third in 70:25.

In the marathon, the Evans engine finally ran smooth three months ago after an ignition fault. He failed to finish his first marathon, blew up in his second but, in his third in Carpi, Italy, in October, he ran 2hr 12min.



Windsor upset: Shu Fly masters Royal Derby, a 100-30 on shot, at the last in the New Year's Day Hurdle

Shu Fly repays the bookmakers

BY RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE big bookmakers enjoyed the best possible start to 1992 at Windsor yesterday when all six favourites were beaten, including Royal Derby who was sent off at 100-30 on to win the day's feature race.

With four of the races being televised, the results provided the off-course layers with a bumper payout and just reward for coming together to sponsor most of the meeting.

Hugo Bevan, clerk of the course, wrote without success to 40 companies and banks seeking sponsorship for the televised meeting. Ladbrokes, William Hill, Coral, and the Tote then agreed to provide around £33,000 backing, which helped pay the £25,000 bill for enticing Channel 4 to the track.

Sally Oliver had not had a winner for 52 days but Shu Fly was always travelling sweetly behind Royal Derby in the William Hill New Year's Day Hurdle.

Ridden by Alan Jones, at 6ft 2in the tallest jumps

jockey by far, Shu Fly swept into the lead at the last to floor the odds-on favourite.

The handicapper is likely to take a dim view of the eight year-old's surprise victory but Henry Oliver, husband of the trainer, was not too worried. "He's going chasing soon so it doesn't matter. That was almost certainly his last hurdle race."

The day of doom and gloom for punters began when Sooner Still, the odds-on favourite in the opening Royal Windsor Handicap

race, faded tamely two fences from home to allow in Brave Defender.

"The front-runner seemed to stop which helped," John White, the winning trainer, said. "Mine is a bit of a thinker and not really a gambler proposition. But Windsor is very lucky for me."

Egypt Mill Prince was the subject of a heavy early-morning gamble in the Tote Credit Handicap Hurdle but could not cope with Tiger Claw.

Ron Hodges's dual-purpose six-year-old.

Kings Fountain rests

KINGS Fountain is to be rested by his trainer, Kim Bailey, following his defeat at Wetherby on Boxing Day.

The strapping chaser, who emerged as a Cheltenham Gold Cup contender with impressive wins in the H & T Walker and A F Budge Gold Cups, has lacked his usual sparkle since being beaten by Stay On Tracks in the Rowland Meyrick Handicap Chase.

"Tests have revealed nothing

but he has been very quiet indeed since his last race and it must have taken a lot of him," Bailey said. "He was lifeless when we saddled him that day and we were a bit concerned about him then."

□ The Queen Mother and Cath Walwyn registered their first successes of the season when Fury Know won the David Garrett Memorial Novices' Chase at Devon yesterdays.

Tiger Claw is owned by Unity Farm Holiday Centre and 800 diners at the company's leisure centre were urged to back the horse on New Year's Eve.

On paper, the Coral Novices' Handicap Chase was one of the worst contests of the Christmas holiday period but the race was run in a time less than half a second outside the track record as Holtermann, running for the first time for two years, stormed home at 25-1.

Lydin Clay, the winning trainer, has an eight-horse string and admits it is not easy to survive "but we struggle along because we love it."

Reapido was backed down from 7-1 to 7-2 joint-favourite with Cosmic Dancer as supporters of Ron Hodges's yard went for a double in the Ladbrokes January Sale Handicap Hurdle. But the favourites' jinx struck again as Reapido finished third behind Welsh Siren.

Iama Zula completed the hangover for favourite backers when foiling Be Surprised in the Echinswell Handicap Chase.

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"I think 11st 6lb is too much for a little horse to carry in a handicap like the Anthony Midday, Peter Cazalet," Bailey explained. "So we're

RACING

Rubika turns the tide for Mellor yard

BY MICHAEL SEELY

CONCUSSION sustained by Mark Perrett in a first-race fall at Cheltenham yesterday saw Anthony Tony pick up the winning ride on Rubika in the featured ASW Handicap Chase.

In a marvellously competitive race, six of the ten runners — Omerta having been withdrawn by Martin Pipe because of the firm ground — were still in with a chance of winning at the third fence from home.

Tony then drove the 15-2 winner clear up the hill to beat the 100-1 shot Honey Bee Mead by two-and-a-half lengths. Boracava finished third and Pampering, another 100-1 chance, fourth.

Bigun, favourite at 3-1, made a bad mistake on the final circuit and was pulled up before the second fence from home.

Rubika's decisive victory certainly heralded a change of luck for Stan Mellor, who celebrated his first winner of the campaign by completing a double with Way Of Life at Leicester 35 minutes later.

"Stan's a patient man," said Elain Mellor, the trainer's wife. "But this isn't the longest we've been without a winner. Two seasons ago we had to wait until January 12 before Zuko won at Sandown."

Ladbrokes now offer 40-1 against Rubika making amends to the trainer for near misses with Royal Mail and Lean Ar Aghaidh in the Grand National. "We've got to think seriously about it," Mrs Mellor added. "He likes jumping up front. He's also very clever and he stays forever."

Ladbrokes have Omerta and Docklands Express as their 20-1 joint-favourites for the National and, after Kim Bailey had won the Woodmancote National Hunt Novices' Hurdle with his improving five-year-old Native Pride, the trainer said that Docklands Express, his King George VI & Queen Elizabeth II dual-purpose runner-up, would travel to Haydock on Saturday for the Newton Chase.

"I think 11st 6lb is too much for a little horse to carry in a handicap like the Anthony Midday, Peter Cazalet," Bailey explained. "So we're

sending him to Haydock and Mr Frisk will run at Sandown."

Further good news for the Haydock executive is that Kataebat is also to travel to Lancashire for the two-and-a-half mile conditions race.

After the reigning champion two-miler had pleased Andy Turnell in a gallop, the trainer said: "He's recovered from the lung infection which saw him run so disappointingly when third to Carville's Hill at Chepstow."

With so much racing over the holiday period, Cheltenham did well to attract such a competitive field for the big race and a crowd of over 10,000 were entertained by quality as well as quantity, Bradbury Star giving a polished display of quick and accurate jumping to win the Steve Smith Eccles Testimonial Novices' Chase.

After the 6-4 favourite had beaten Danny Harrold by three-and-a-half lengths, Josh Gifford said: "We'll enter him in both the novice chases at the festival. But he'll probably go for the Sun Alliance unless it becomes very heavy."

Jenny Pitman, delighted by Danny Harrold's first appearance over fences, said: "That was a good run. I now want to run him in the Thunder and Lightning Chase at Ascot next week."

The trainer added that Toby Tobias, who disappointed when fourth behind The Fellow at Kempton, is being aimed at the John Bull Chase at Wincanton a week today. "He was a bit lame after tearing a shoe off during the Kempton race," she added. "But he's back on song now."

The redoubtable Mary Revelley had her second winner at the meeting when Swift Sword stayed on strongly in the hands of Peter Niven to beat The Blue Boy in the Steel Plate Trial Hurdle.

Owned by a partnership of three, headed by Geoff Peacock from Middlesbrough, the winner is now a 25-1 chance (from 33-1) with Ladbrokes for the Daily Express Triumph Hurdle.

Mrs Revelley's luck ran out when Mr Woodcock, an uneasy even-money favourite for the ASW Bill Love Memorial Hurdle, finished last behind Mudahim.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Schofield sinks Salford

BY KEITH MACKLIN

tage and every hope of gaining revenge for defeat in the Royal Trophy semi-finals.

But Schofield, who had scored the first Leeds try, began to take control and Leeds sneaked into a 12-10 lead at the interval when Bentley scooted down the wing and hurled a pass inside hoping someone would be on the receiving end. Creassey was and he went 25 metres for the touchdown, with Irving kicking his second goal.

In the second half, Salford fell away drastically and Leeds achieved a breathing space at 18-10 when Bentley took advantage of another piece of Schofield skill to score a try.

Salford then folded and, in a typical purple patch of Leeds attacking, they scored four more tries. Bentley claimed a second and Dixton, Ford and Carl Gibson ran through a Salford defence

that appeared to capitulate too easily.

Doug Laughlin, the Leeds coach, was not particularly pleased with his side's first-half performance but said: "We are still top of the league and, although our performance today wasn't perfect, it was good enough to keep us there. That makes me happy."

Laughton will no doubt be happier still when Hanley returns from his broken jaw; since Wigan are breathing ominously down the Leeds necks and threatening yet another successful takeover bid at the top.

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TABLE TENNIS

Absentee Prean holds key

BY RICHARD EATON

THE absence of Carl Prean, England's No. 1, from all but two of the seven matches in the tour by China may be crucial to English hopes of winning a series against the Chinese for the first time.

Prean is a tactically astute hard-working player, plying his trade in Germany. He was absent again last night, from the fourth match of the series at the Concorde Leisure Centre, Sheffield, preferring to rest in the middle of a hard season's schedule — providing England with a harder task than the Chinese for the first time.

While players might not think it "sporting" to report such matters to the police, they should remember that injuries have a bad habit of getting worse, rather than better, and, in the case of eye injuries, could well result in the victim losing sight and maybe his or her job.

A punch in the eye is no different to one thrown through the Rose and Crown on a Saturday night. On those occasions the suspect is arrested and, in a great number of cases appears before magistrates or judges to account for his actions. If convicted, the defendant stands a good chance of ending up in prison.

Why should we treat thugs on a sports field any less severely? The time has come to silence those who say "it is all part of the game" and, in doing so, to ensure that other players are properly protected.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE CRAWFORD,
23 Grafton Close,
Worcester Park,
Surrey.

From the Deputy Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers' Association
Sir, While I would not seek to

SPORTS LETTERS

Injury should be reported

From Mr George Crawford
Sir. The letter by Edward Grayson (December 26) prompts me to write in support of his appeal for sportsmen and women to report criminal injuries on the field of play to police as soon as practicable.

While players might not think it "sporting" to report such matters to the police, they should remember that injuries have a bad habit of getting worse, rather than better, and, in the case of eye injuries, could well result in the victim losing sight and maybe his or her job.

A punch in the eye is no different to one thrown through the Rose and Crown on a Saturday night. On those occasions the suspect is arrested and, in a great number of cases appears before magistrates or judges to account for his actions. If convicted, the defendant stands a good chance of ending up in prison.

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23 Grafton Close,
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Surrey.

From the Deputy Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers' Association
Sir, While I would not seek to

TIME FOR COACHING REHINK

From Mr Roshan Salih

Sir. There has been plenty of talk about the need for a reduction in the size of English football's top division, as if the day it is reduced to 18 clubs the game will be cured of all its problems. While I would agree that a reduction is necessary, it is simply one element in a catalogue of problems.

England proudly reserves the right to be mentioned in the same breath as Germany, Italy, Brazil and Argentina as football's traditional world powers. However, England has failed to win an international tournament for over 25 years and has got close only once. The future does not look promising either and I fear that England may be stuck in world football's mediocre category, outside the leading teams. This is a particular shame, as the general standard is not high around the world at this moment. Furthermore, I do not believe this scenario will change until the mentality of England's one-dimensional coaches evolves.

John Uzzell was treated no differently from any other member. When I heard of the incident (which I did not witness) from the PFA delegate at Torquay United FC, I advised Uzzell to speak to our lawyers. Contrary to Mr Grayson's information, Uzzell took this advice and spoke at length to our lawyer, who advised him of all his rights, including the right to make a complaint to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

Incidents involving members with conflicting interests are always sensitive. The PFA has to adopt a neutral position, but we will advise all members of their rights and do not seek to avoid the issue.

Yours faithfully,
BRENDON BATSON,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Professional Footballers'
Association.

2 Oxford Court,
Lower Mosley Street,
Manchester 2.

long-ball game, which predominates in the Football League, with its emphasis on workrate at the expense of skill, control, intelligence, passing of the ball and movement off it, together with the obsession with rigid formations, has manifested itself in contemporary players of appalling quality. Such tactics may work in the English league, but they will not at the higher level — a recent example being Arsenal's humiliation at the hands of only an average Benfica side.

Previous British success at this level has been based on the mastery of the continental game, combined with positive British attributes such as power and relentless attacking. This is the way to bring back major trophies to British soil — as Liverpool have proved — and the way to entertain. (By the way isn't that what sport is all about or am I being naive?)

Yours faithfully,
ROSHAN SALIH,
4 Min-y-don Road,
Old Colwyn,
Clwyd.

Falling into trap

From Mr G. M. Shepherd

Sir, In his article on sporting "heroes" and "egits" (December 26) Simon Barnes seems to have fallen into the very trap he accused the British public of falling into in an article a few days earlier. He assigns Andre Agassi to the "egit" category purely on his performances in the Wimbledon and US open championships.

It is a pity that he ignored Agassi's fine performances in the Davis Cup and the Association of Tennis Professionals finals. Both in the semi-finals of the Davis Cup and in the ATP finals Agassi beat the Wimbledon champion, Michael Stich, without losing a set. He also beat Boris Becker in the ATP finals in the same manner and

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PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS**National Park Officer**

The appointment of Michael Dower as Director General of the Countryside Commission leaves vacant the most challenging post in the management of Britain's National Parks.

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The post, leading a staff of 300 and overseeing a budget of £7 million, requires proven managerial ability and wide experience of countryside matters. It is not restricted to any one discipline, but the postholder is likely to possess a degree, or a professional or management qualification, together with at least ten years relevant experience.

Local government experience at a senior level and knowledge of the National Park system in England and Wales are desirable, but applicants who have gained relevant management experience in other fields will also be considered. The Peak Park Joint Planning Board is an equal opportunities employer.

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Full details and application forms from Personnel Officer, National Park Office, Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE4 1AE (0629) 814321. The closing date for applications is 20 January 1992.

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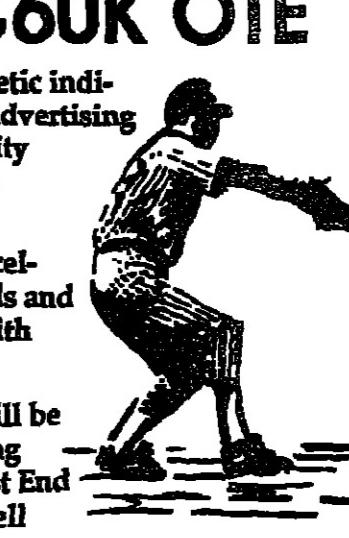
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Job in 1st

America abandons veto on BAe sales to Iran

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND ROSS TIEMAN IN LONDON

THE Bush administration has abandoned its controversial refusal to allow British Aerospace to sell civil aircraft with American components to Iran. There has been no announcement but reliable Washington sources said Lawrence Eagleburger, the deputy secretary of state, had approved a commerce department decision to permit the sales.

The administration's change of heart might have come too late to rescue BAe's contract to sell an Iranian airline up to 12 BAe 146 regional jets. Washington's approval is important, however, as the company is understood to be pursuing several other contracts in the Iranian market.

The about-turn will also remove a rare bone of contention between London and Washington. The administration imposed its veto last July despite sustained British lobbying and the personal intervention of Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary. The American decision was publicly criticised by ministers who pointed out that Washington had approved the sale to Iran of Dutch Fokker 100 aircraft with similar amounts of American components.

Mr Eagleburger's decision was clearly facilitated by the

recent release of the last American hostages held by Iranian-backed groups in Lebanon and the return of the remains of two Americans who died in captivity there. This alleviated the administration's earlier fears of a congressional outcry if it allowed the sales.

However, the commerce department had separately decided that the 146 contained too few American components to breach the 10 per cent threshold above which its approval was required for selling products to countries that sponsored terrorism. It had originally assessed the 146 as having 16 per cent American parts, but later decided the American-made engine should not be counted as it was licensed for production before the legislation came into effect.

British Aerospace was hoping to sell Iran four 146 jets, worth between \$100 million and \$150 million, and options on eight additional aircraft. Two weeks ago, the company was sufficiently encouraged to send three demonstration aircraft to Iran to go through their paces.

Iran has a fleet of ageing Boeings to replace. The 146, which can carry up to 120 passengers, would help to improve links within the country and with neighbouring states.



Approval: Lawrence Eagleburger, deputy secretary

Ukraine applies for full membership of IMF

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON

UKRAINE has become the first member of the new Commonwealth of former Soviet republics to apply to join the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Full membership could give Ukraine access to millions of dollars in loans to help it to build a market economy, instead of simply the advice and technical assistance that are all the two financial institutions can offer at present.

As a condition of those loans, Ukraine would have to follow an economic reform plan approved by the IMF.

In a letter to the World Bank, Leonid Kravchuk, the Ukrainian president, said he was confident that his application would be accepted and his country would thus be permitted to play an appropriate role in the global economy'.

The Baltic states — Estonia,

Lithuania and Latvia — which gained their independence at the end of last summer, have already become members, and applications are expected soon from Russia and the other newly independent republics.

The Soviet Union had special associate membership but its early summer application for full membership made little progress. Officials said Ukraine's application would be processed as quickly as possible, but full membership could still take some months.

Among other things, the IMF has to decide what shareholding Ukraine should be allocated, a decision normally based on data, such as past economic performance, that will be very difficult to compile in the case of the former republics.

The size of the shareholding helps to determine

the size of potential loans. On Monday, John Major, the prime minister, urged Russia and other members of the new Commonwealth of Independent States to seek early membership of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

"Full membership will enable you to draw on the considerable financial resources of these institutions in support of an agreed reform programme," he told Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, in a letter.

President Bush has said that America will support membership of the two bodies for the new states and IMF officials are already preparing economic reform plans for them.

One advantage for the industrialised nations is that they would be under less pressure to provide direct financial aid themselves.

ZALE Corporation, America's largest jeweller and the biggest competitor to the American operations of Britain's Ratners Group, is expected to seek the protection of the bankruptcy courts following a major reorganisation and an 11 per cent drop in Christmas takings.

Ratners was itself conspicuous by its absence from the year-end cheer on the London stock market, with a 3p fall to 27p.

Zale's creditors are threatening to force the store chain into bankruptcy after it unilaterally stopped payments to suppliers, bankers and bondholders on Monday, three days ahead of today's final deadline to make \$52 million in interest payments on debts of about \$1.2 billion.

Zale is closing 400 of its 2,000 stores and shedding 2,500 of the 12,500 workforce.

The agreement secures the position of David Shaffer, the head of Macmillan, MCC's largest subsidiary. Mr Potts said the administrators and Mr Gillin would work to ensure Mr Shaffer remains in executive control of Macmillan and the Official Airlines Guide in America. MCC's other directors lose their executive powers.

PW hopes the agreement will allow it to start trying to reconstruct MMC, which owes the banks £1.3 billion. Numerous disposals are expected.

Both the administrators and the examiner have the right to appear in court in Britain or America.

Mr Gillin has the right to investigate the assets and liabilities of MCC, but must defer to any investigations under way by PW. He also has the right to appoint solicitors, accountants and merchant bankers to advise him.

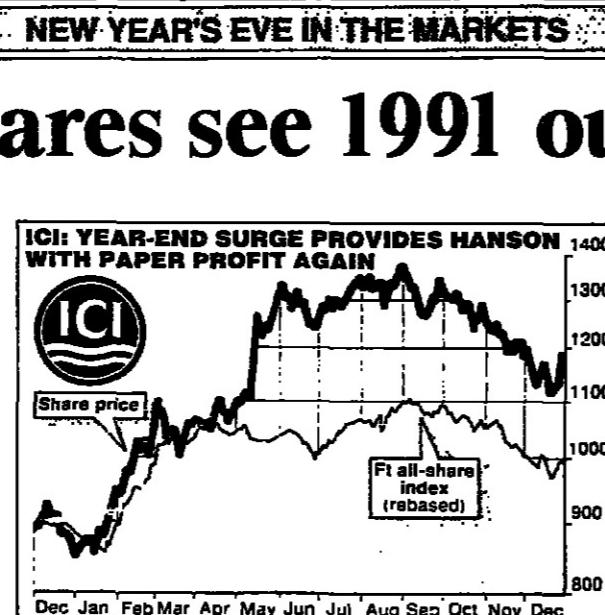
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The marine cargo market has been slower to react, according to Ian Agnew, the chairman of IC Agnew Underwriting, with rates showing little movement so far. This is because the insured limits are lower, placing fewer demands on market capacity. Only when loss-making underwriters finally give up cargo as a bad lot will the market significantly improve. That may take some time yet.

In the energy account,

there have been improvements in rates and conditions, and, barring any appalling losses on the scale of Piper Alpha, there should be a return to profit next year, according to Mr

JONATHAN PRYNN



London's shares see 1991 out with a bang

ANOTHER record-breaking run overnight in New York enabled share prices in London to see the old year out with a bang. The equity market enjoyed its biggest one-day rise of the year after the Dow Jones industrial average's 6.2-point surge on Monday to yet another all-time high as American investors continued to take an optimistic view of the American economy.

The FT-SE 100 index advanced towards 2,500 but closed just below its best of the day with a rise of 73.1 points at 2,493.1. Its previous biggest one-day rise was October 1990, when it leapt by 73 points on the news that Britain was going to join the exchange-rate mechanism.

The improvement on the year is an impressive 17 per cent. The index has now risen 135 points since the start of the Christmas week alone, wiping out the losses of the previous account.

Dealers said the advance had been partly fuelled by the expiration of the December FT-SE 100 index options and futures where there had been a number of short positions that needed to be covered.

Trading in London, unlike New York, remained thin with only 306 million shares changing hands.

Market-makers had been anxious to maintain level trading positions over the holiday and this, combined with the end of the financial year for several securities houses, stifled demand. However, despite the City's apparent euphoria, some traders are worried.

Wall Street is currently being revalued to reflect the increased optimism about the American economy. However, there is no such optimism about the British economy. The expected upturn is some

way off and the pound is still giving cause for concern on the foreign exchanges. Fund managers are also bracing themselves for further dividend cuts by leading companies this year.

Government securities enjoyed an early rally as the overseas selling, which featured strongly on Monday, dried up. But early gains of £1 at the longer end were eventually scaled back to 5¢.

As with the previous Wall Street-inspired gains, it was leading companies with an international flavour, or that have an American quotation, which made all the early running.

Leading the way higher was ICI, with the shares 76p dearer at £12.10. That will be good news for Hanson, which is again enjoying a paper profit on its near 3 per cent investment in ICI, having paid £11.94 a share.

Others to make headway included BAT, 16p to 618p,

top 100 to end lower on the day was BICC, down 9p at 303p, as the company faced up to the prospect of losing its position in the FT-SE 100 index. The shares were a weak market last year with analysts becoming increasingly bearish. But Graeme Cull at Kleinwort Benson, the broker, has made BICC his

share of the year for 1992. He believes the selling has been overdone and he expects the dividend to be maintained despite the view to the contrary elsewhere. A maintained dividend would revive confidence in the shares and provide a rating likely to attract the income funds. The new constituents in the index include MB-Caradon, 10p better at 264p, Laporte, 35p higher at 620p, and Tomkins, 5p up at 410p.

The pharmaceuticals sector was again a hotbed of activity with prices continuing to make headway as brokers took the view that the sector will grow strongly in 1992.

The big names were all chased high in thin trading. Wellcome attracted further support after this week's bullish news that the group had found a way of slowing down the death rate among AIDS sufferers during the first year of the disease with a cocktail

of drugs, made up of its own anti-Aids drug, Retrovir, and Zovirax, the anti-herpes treatment.

The shares finished 35p higher at another all-time high of £11.01 — rise on the week of so far of 137p. Analysts expect the new treatment to add an extra £100 million to sales in the long term.

Fisons continued to claw back Friday's losses with a rise of 15p to 326p. The shares were affected by reports in an American newsletter that the group's relationship with America's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was under strain because of increasing production problems.

Others to make headway included Glaxo, 40p to 853p. London International, 5p to 520p. Macrurra, 3p to 269p. Reckitt & Colman, 22p to 645p, and Smith & Nephew, 1p in 139p.

SmithKline Beecham's A shares climbed 43p to 896p as the group obtained FDA approval to market Relafen, its anti-inflammatory drug, in America.

The stores sector was bravely facing up to 1992, regardless of the persistent pessimism concerning consumers' confidence and the almost certain knowledge that Christmas had been something of a flop for the retailers.

There were improvements for Argos, 4p to 273p. Body Shop, 11p to 354p. Boots, 3p to 429p. Dixons, 8p to 205p. Great Universal Stores A, 26p to £14.15. Kingfisher, 15p to 482p. Marks and Spencer, 10p to 278p. Next, 2p to 57.5p. Sears, 4p to 94p. and Storehouse, 3p to 88p.

□ **Sydney** — The all-orders closed 38.9 points higher at 1,651.4 after investors went on a buying spree.

□ **Frankfurt** — Closed for the New Year holiday. The market reopens today. (Reuters)

Dow ends with 20% gain on year

New York — Share prices closed 1991 on a strong note as a late surge of year-end buying sent several market indexes to their fourth consecutive record. The Dow Jones industrial average ended at 3,168.83, up 4.92 points, an all-time closing high. The blue-chip index has ended its best December ever, up about 274 points, and up 535 points, or 20 per cent, on the year.

An opening rise was quickly wiped out in late morning amid some program selling and persistent profit-taking, but year-end window dressing of portfolios and the market's momentum pushed the market higher in the late afternoon.

Other market indices rallying to all-time record closes included the Nasdaq composite, which rose 6.59 to 586.34 and the Standard & Poor's

500 stock index, which gained nearly 2 points to 417. The Nasdaq had surged nearly 57 per cent for the year, while the S&P 500 had gained 26 per cent.

Thomas Walsh, the chief of trading at Nikko Securities, said the market's strong momentum could carry the Dow average to 3,200, which is now about 30 points away. He said: "Psychology and sentiment will cause a run to 3,200."

□ **Tokyo** — The Nikkei index finished the year strongly on Monday, up 2.44 per cent, to 22,983.77 after the Bank of Japan cut the discount rate from 5 per cent to

4.297.33.

□ **Sydney** — The all-orders closed 38.9 points higher at 1,651.4 after investors went on a buying spree.

□ **Frankfurt** — Closed for the New Year holiday. The market reopens today. (Reuters)

MCC deal avoids Anglo-US legal battle

BY NEIL BENNETT

THE High Court in London has approved a co-operation deal between Price Waterhouse and a New York lawyer for the running of Maxwell Communication Corporation, the media group.

Robin Potts QC, counsel for PW, revealed in court on Tuesday that the agreement is essentially one of power-sharing between PW, administrator of MCC, and Richard Gitlin, a Connecticut lawyer appointed under American bankruptcy laws as MCC's

examiner.

For Lloyd's, fighting its corner in the harsh commercial environment of the insurance industry, this will be a vital year.

Above all, Lloyd's needs to see an accelerated continuation of the hardening in insurance rates that began last year if it is to reverse the outflow of names from the market. Twelve months ago, most senior Lloyd's figures were confidently predicting a sharp upturn in the insurance cycle and a return to profitable underwriting during the course of the year.

Now 1991 is being seen as something of a disappointment, with early indications suggesting a break-even year rather than a runaway success. The upturn came late and only affected certain classes of business. Profit warnings from Sturge and AJ Archer, the two main publicly quoted underwriting agencies, about their 1991 results gives an indication of how much further there is to go before the dark days of Lloyd's are banished.

By far the most disappointing market within Lloyd's was non-marine, where property rates, in particular commercial fire, have seen little upward movement. Increases in other areas, such as liability and professional indemnity, are described as "adequate" by John Wetherell, the outgoing chairman of the Lloyd's Underwriters' Non-Marine Association.

While the market suffered none of the catastrophic natural and man-made disasters of earlier years, there was still a sufficient sprinkling of smaller, but still very large, losses to make life uncomfortable for non-marine underwriters. These included the Calgary hailstorm, hurricane Bob, and the California fires, and in the last three months of the year.

With the LMX reinsurance market still dramatically depleted, a far greater proportion of these losses than in the past will fall on the direct insurers and their primary reinsurers. The result has been a continuing shake out in the non-marine market, with perhaps 20 out of 180 syndicates disappearing this year and, according to Mr Wetherell, lower capacity. Whether this will be sufficient to give them the kick start they really need remains to be seen.

Mr Wetherell believes that rises of between 25 and 100 per cent are necessary if "awful ramifications" are to be avoided.

However, the general perception is that the non-marine market is lagging a year or two behind the rest of the market and that, in time, rates will pick up.

In the marine market, last year has been a far more promising year with rate increases coming through strongly, although perhaps a little late in the year for comfort. That process is widely expected to continue this year.

On the pure marine business, rises of between 25 and 40 per cent have been typical, though in the case of policyholders with poorer claims records, the hikes have been high as 150 per cent. Just as importantly, the terms of the policies have changed significantly in the underwriters' favour. For example, the notorious "additional perils" coverage, which brought every petty act of crew negligence under the umbrella of the policy, has been largely withdrawn.

Meanwhile, among the wreckage of huge losses in other sectors, the motor market chugs along nicely, and profitably. According to Colin White, of the Lloyd's Motor Underwriters' Association, rates started moving in late summer, accelerating through the autumn and "exploding" from October onwards.

The process continues and is expected to go on through the first half of this year. Year on year, the rate increases by December are about 25 per cent, with at least a further 10 per cent to come. Given that in 1988 only one of the 30 motor syndicates at Lloyd's incurred a loss, these figures suggest a bright outlook for 1992.

Overall, the prospects for Lloyd's in pure financial terms are better than they have been since the mid-Eighties. The recovery is undoubtedly under way, although it is patchy and painfully slow in some accounts. The flood of claims between 1988 and 1990 may be receding, but it has left a grim high water mark of losses open years and litigation.

If this year is set to be one of recovery, it will also be the year that the Outhwaite case is decided and the American names come to court. If these legal landmarks go against Lloyd's, the best underwriting results in the history of the market may not be sufficient to compensate for the damage inflicted.

JONATHAN PRYNN

NEW YORK

THE DOW JONES INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE

When sterling's luck runs out

The prime minister will be crossing his fingers in hope that the confidence he expressed in his new year message will improve sentiment for the pound when markets reopen today after the long break. His reassurance that there will be no devaluation of the pound through a realignment within the European exchange-rate mechanism was intended for the ears of the currency dealers. For the test facing sterling from this morning and, more demandingly, from Monday, when the Japanese market reopens, is whether or not the pound can continue to maintain some daylight above its ERM floor with the lowest differential between German and British interest rates for more than a decade.

Mr Major's dismissal of the "fool's gold" of devaluation, and his careful elaboration of the loss of credibility such a move would entail, might appear as a mere prime ministerial booster to the Chancellor's talk-up of the pound. After all, it took only a few words from Norman Lamont on December 13 to give the pound a three-pointing lift, without wasting a penny of reserves. The pledge then was not to emulate the Italians and use an eventual British move from 6 per cent ERM fluctuation bands to 2.25 percent margins for a sneak devaluation.

The Bundesbank's unseasonal Christmas gift of a half-point increase in its Lombard and discount rates, later more than wiped out the benefit from the Chancellor's verbal massage. But Lady Luck, in the form of thin currency markets during the festive season and the Bank of England's \$4.3 billion war chest for intervention, prevented any serious assault on the pound. The question is whether this luck will hold out or whether those ever-lauded market forces will put the government's resolve to the test. Given the clausiveness of the promised recovery, some currency analysts still believe the government can be stamped into desperate action.

Current wisdom is that voters' perceptions of the economy will decide the election. Low inflation, the pyrrhic victory to emerge from deep recession, will be insufficient to demonstrate good management. This school of thought believes Mr Lamont could opt to slash interest rates American-style to ensure recovery. Pressure on sterling would be met by either moving to narrow bands, a *l'Italienda*, or by securing a general ERM realignment. The alternative school of thought, now in the ascendant in the City, will have been encouraged by Mr Major's remarks to believe that he intends to go to country with sterling at its present central rate of DM2.95. That not only means no devaluation, but assures the low-inflation and "steady" (read sluggish) growth the prime minister declared as his main goals.

If the no-devaluation school is correct, the markets are certain to want base rates brought into line with "sovereign" market rates. The Bank of England, as a strict operator, knows it would be foolish to try to buck an earnest market for too long. Currently, the pound enjoys splendid isolation as the only ERM currency not to have followed the Bundesbank tightening. Nobody appears to be seeking a general realignment that would allow Britain an escape hatch.

Mr Lamont has to choose between a Custer's Last Stand that will cost him his reserves, or retain the initiative with an early base-rate hike. The latter would demonstrate that the government has not been entirely out of action where monetary policy is concerned and would demonstrate its commitment to the ERM. Given the prospect of British inflation below that of Germany in the first quarter, a base rate rise could be quickly reversed, thus presenting no undue threat to the recovery we still await.

Douglas McWilliams
of the CBI forecasts
that Europe's economic
hangover will provide a
headache for the UK

It is tempting to be depressed with the Cheshire Cat recovery which faded away during 1991 and to react by surrounding any positive prediction for 1992 with the ambiguity of caveats.

Yet the conventional wisdom is that there will be some modest lifting of the clouds surrounding the economy in 1992 as inflation falls further, savings stop rising, government spending projects come on stream and business inventories get so low the shelves become bare and the storage tanks empty and need refilling.

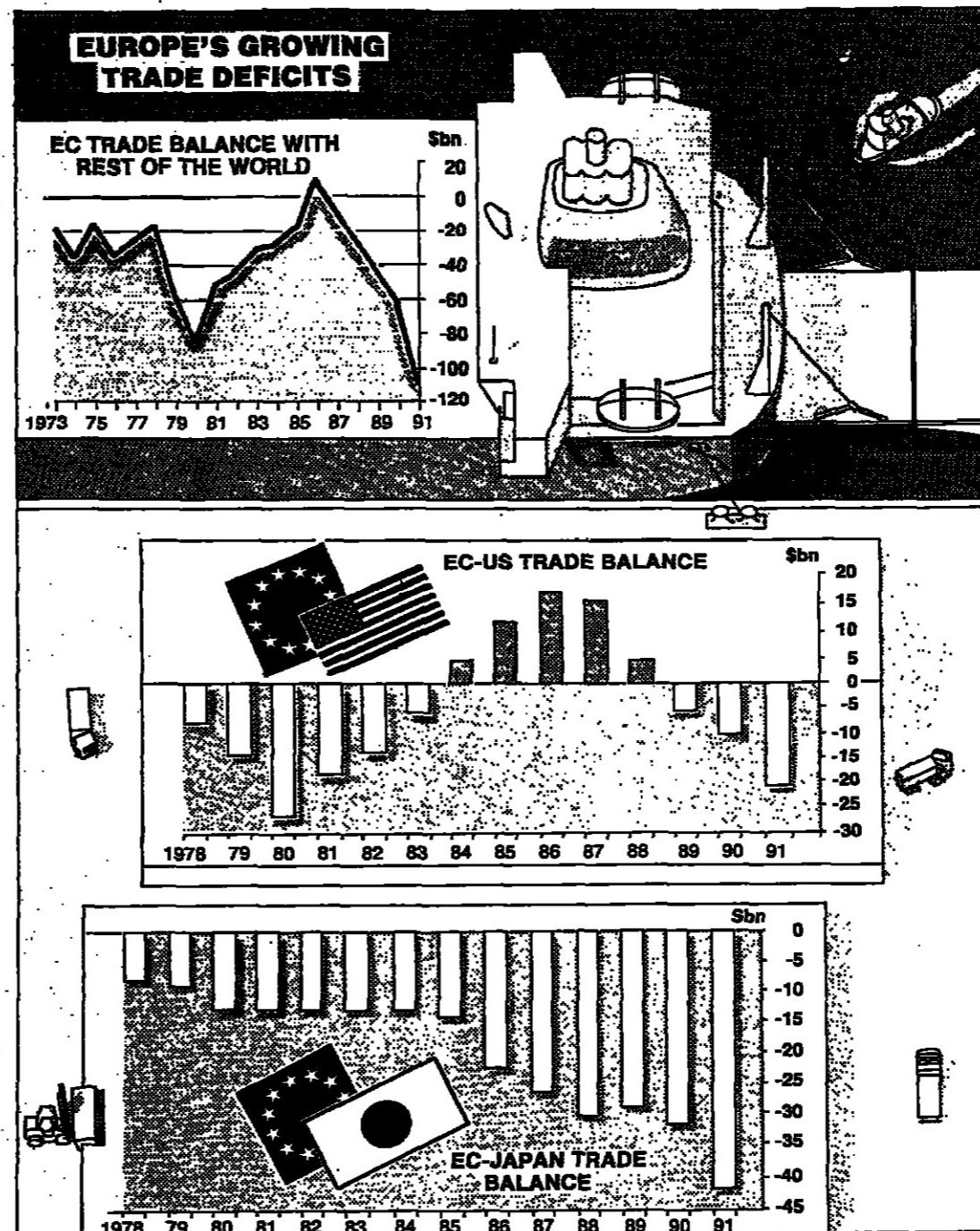
The United Kingdom will be held back by a weak world economy and particularly a European economy — taking more than 50 per cent of our exports — suffering from the hangover after the party of German unification. The feedthrough of this hangover to the other European countries is all the greater because we are in an uncomfortable intermediate stage: there is now effectively a single European currency but because the institutions of that single currency have not yet come into operation, interest rate policy is still decided by the Bundesbank.

It would be unrealistic to expect that the Bundesbank will run the single currency in anything other than the German interest — which is considered to be defeating inflation by high interest rates rather than by paying for the costs of unification in higher taxes. So high rates are the rule in Europe whatever the domestic economic conditions until lower inflation emerges in Germany. This may not be until late 1992.

There is the theoretical option of a realignment of the European currency but too much credibility has been invested in maintaining the strength of most European currencies against the mark to be thrown away lightly. So growth in most of western Europe in 1992 will be poised somewhere between the slow and the non-existent. Moreover, many European countries are suffering the competitive damage that results from labour markets that are both inflexible and expensive.

The cost of labour including the so-called social overheads for employers in the main European countries varies from \$15 per hour in the United Kingdom to \$24 in Germany. This compares with about \$14 in America and Japan, and \$3 to \$4 in Singapore, Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong. The result has been an erosion of European export performance — the European Community has lost one third of its world export market share since 1985.

This is a relatively new problem for most parts of Europe. In Britain, by comparison, we have had a long experience of losing export markets and have made a start in trying to



turn the problem round. The main ingredients have been allowing managers to make their own decisions through deregulation and privatisation, improved skills training (the best news from Confederation of British Industry surveys throughout the recession so far has been the persistence of positive investment intentions for training) and more flexible labour markets.

It is unfortunate that most EC countries have insisted on going ahead with their social chapter which will lock in their competitive problems rather than learning from past British mistakes. Yet eventually economic pressures will force them to abrogate or ignore the social chapter. The tragedy is that this will only happen after European workers have suffered the lost jobs that are the inevitable result of such empty promises.

The deeper underlying fear for the economies of the English-speaking world for 1992 are that we will have to continue to pay a heavy price for

bursting the inflationary bubble of the Eighties. Although ultimately it is inflation that becomes pervasive, the most prominent signs were in the asset markets, especially property.

There are huge long-term economic and social benefits from bursting this bubble. Eventually, when inflation is securely down, there is the prospect of a housing market based on needs without speculation pushing prices out of range of most first-time buyers; of a business climate where the long term yield from investment is more important than the short-term profits from deals of bankers who will prefer to lend against a genuine track-record rather than finance speculation; and of pay rises based on performance rather than theoretical compensation for inflation.

Achieving these gains will be good for those with skills in providing what customers need and bad for the spivs and wide-boys. They will be good for those who are prepared to

work hard and bad for those who make their living from trading in volatile markets. All societies need their market-traders but the wrong signals are sent if they are excessively rewarded from the fruits of inflation compared with others who also provide essential goods and services. Above all, low inflation will reward the saver, not the borrower, and help reintroduce the virtue of thrift.

But the price of disinflation is similar to that of giving up hard drugs. In Britain much of our financial system has been based on the assumption that inflation will bail out borrower and lender. This reinforced the easy availability of credit during the boom.

The problem is that disinflation has made a sizable proportion of this past lending unviable, leading to bad debt provisions and mortgage repossessions. In America the entire building society sector, the "savings and loans", has had to be bailed out

by the federal government at an uncertain cost running into billions of dollars. And the credit ratings of the main American banks are lower than those of their blue-chip customers. In the United Kingdom, our financial system did not go as far, but the scale of the unexpected problems has left many bankers shell-shocked. Moreover, a tradition of asset-backed lending means that past practices give little guidance on how to lend in non-inflationary times. And whereas in the long term a rise in saving is an essential ingredient in financing investment, higher saving while the banking system is in this state risks deflation.

Economic theory does not tell us how long this "cold turkey" will last. If only two years, we are nearly through it, and the worst is over; if five years, then there is more bad news to come. The evidence from past history is moderately encouraging — disinflation in the high inflation countries of South America has worked its way through in small numbers of years, while the United Kingdom in the early Thirties had two years of falling output followed by a further year with output flat before a healthy recovery started with growth at an annual rate of more than 4 per cent for five years.

The leading indicators today suggest the belt is just about loose enough to let our economy start moving again. Although monetary growth has fallen sharply, broad money has still expanded by 6 per cent in the past year. With inflation trending to 3 per cent, this should allow some scope for real growth.

The critical factor is confidence, which has been volatile in the past nine months. At present it is weak in both consumer and business circles and may well remain so while the prospects for the economy and for politics remain uncertain. Against that, the measures announced in the autumn statement and since plus any further economic stimuli that might emerge in the coming months should stabilise the position.

This leaves the election. With most commentators hedging their bets about who will win, a Conservative victory would probably have a much stronger positive effect on business and financial confidence than in either 1983 or 1987. A Labour victory (or in some ways worse a hung parliament) would prolong the lack of certainty over the economy, at least until some credibility was established. This might require higher interest rates for a few months and the putting on one side of items of party dogma such as higher income taxes, the minimum wage and revised social benefits.

As a schoolboy cadet learning about target-spotting, I was told that "straight lines never occur in nature". The economy this year may be much the same. It looks as though early 1992 will be weak, the mid-year should show some improvement and the direction at year-end will depend on the election.

□ This article is the personal view of Professor McWilliams, who is chief economic adviser to the Confederation of British Industry.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY



CITY DIARY

Dynamic duo reunited

SMITH New Court, the broker, is taking yet another stride away from its traditional image as a jobber. The firm, still remembered by some as the Smith Brothers of old, is starting the new year with a strong push into the transportation sector. It has just recruited Mark Laurence, transport analyst at Carr, Kitcat & Aitken, to help create a new transport research team. And the move will be something of a reunion, too, since Laurence will find himself once again working alongside Clive Anderson, a fellow transport specialist. The pair had once formed the number-one Exel-rated transport team at Kitcat & Aitken before its demise in the summer of 1990. Laurence moved on to Carr, Kitcat while Anderson, deciding on a change of direction, joined the corporate finance team at Royal Bank of Canada instead. Anderson joined Smith in November, and now he and Laurence are hopeful of regaining their former position in the City's league tables. "We are going to try to rekindle the old flame," says Laurence, a tennis coach in his time, and looking fit and bronzed after a Christmas break playing tennis in sunnier climes. He starts at Smith today.

Freebie — almost
CITY stickers who fancy a free trip to New York later this year can sign up today — but with two onerous conditions attached. When they arrive there, they will be

obliged to compete in the New York Marathon. And before they step on board the aircraft they must have raised at least £1,250 in sponsorship to help Whizz-Kidz, the charity that buys sports and powered wheelchairs for disabled children and teenagers. The 150 runners who took part in the 1991 challenge raised sufficient to buy wheelchairs for 60 children, and Whizz-Kidz wants to double that number at the 1992 marathon, scheduled for November 1. Michael Dickson, the charity's founder, hopes that the scheme will appeal to runners turned away from the London marathon. "We are recruiting City-based people now for free guaranteed entry to the New York race and we will pay each runner's travel costs up to £395," he says. "We have set up a similar incentive scheme to get runners into the Paris and Rotterdam Marathons in March and April respectively. Again, if there is a £1,000 pledge in place, we will pay for travel and two nights' complimentary accommodation." Last

year's Whizz-Kidz Challenge Cup was won by a team of City runners led by Richard Gray of Gerrard & National.

Given the bird

WORD now reaches us that fund managers at Rothschild had to endure the hardship of doing some last-minute Christmas grocery shopping after their annual gift of Christmas turkey each was unexpectedly cancelled. It seems that a cold room housing the birds failed during the weekend before Christmas, leaving the assembled birds all trussed up and nowhere to go. Legend has it that, true to office politics, the size of the bird was to vary in accordance with the seniority of the recipient: the bigger the fund manager, the bigger the turkey.

Double losers

STAFF at the Maxwell family's bankrupt New York *Daily News* have tested a new investment strategy. About 30 employees, including its editor James Wilcox, got together to back a racehorse named *Pension Fraud* running at the Aqueduct track. The pool placed \$225 on the 7-2 favourite. But unfortunately the odds found that their luck had not changed. *Pension Fraud* came in a distant third. "We got taken again," bemoans one reporter. "But this time, it was with our eyes wide open."

Whoops!

GREAT boos of our time... the following correction was rushed out by the Press Association news service: "In 1 CITY Racal (Racal tows takeover victory) read in fourth par 'Racal chairman Sir Ernest Harrison ...' substituting 'Harrison' for 'Saunders'."

THE Reader's Digest has written to its readers to wish them a happy new year. The letter is signed by the company's prize draw manager... one Tom Champagne.

JON ASHWORTH



Germany grows

From Dr J. Pressburger
Sir, Mr Roger Nightingale states in his article "German rate bombshell is just a damp squib" (Business News, December 30): "When it becomes clear that Germany... is headed for its most severe downturn since the Thirties, eyebrows will be raised."

In contrast, Dr Franz Thomas, the highly respected economic editor of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, quotes the IFO institute expecting a growth of 1.5 per cent for west Germany and 12 per cent for the eastern part, raising the total for the whole of Germany to a growth of 2 per cent in 1992.

Whatever else may affect the economic scene in Germany and the interest rates there, it won't be "the most severe downturn..."

On the other hand, Mr Delors' Social Charter, including the authority of the European trade unions to insist on excessive wage claims may well prompt the Bundesbank to keep these rates at a high level for quite some time to come.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN PRESSBURGER,
167 MorningSide Road,
Edinburgh 10.

Taking off

From Miss M. Howells
Sir, You write (Comment, December 17) "If consumers ceased to fear debt and unemployment quite so much, they could provide their own fuel of confidence for take off."

With every available plane ticket reported to be sold for holidays abroad this Christmas, the recession appears to have holes. Has anybody worked out where and why?

M. HOWELLS,
64 Victoria Drive,
SW19.

Maastricht muddle on pensions

From Mr D. Lindsay
Sir, The news that a protocol to the Maastricht agreement has reversed much of the right to equal treatment in occupational pensions that the Barber decision had established (Business News, December 13) is hardly a good omen for Europe.

Not only has a pensions "inequality" provision been put in place in just 18 months, while the draft directive on equality in state pensions has languished unpassed for four years, the provision was not debated in Parliament, either at member state or European level, and it totally disregards the principle of subsidiarity.

As the problem created by Barber is to reconcile justice with practicality, it clearly does make good sense to legislate, rather than litigate, but

the protocol is, therefore, unacceptable.

Yours faithfully,

DAVID LINDSAY,
Legal Adviser, Campaign for Equal State Pension Ages.

36 Orchard Coombe,

Flaxhill,

Reading,

Berkshire.

Worthing,

West Sussex.

Worthington,

THE TIMES BUSINESS

THURSDAY JANUARY 2 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

Decline in fees raises pressure to cut costs

More job losses expected at merchant banks

BY NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

TODAY IN BUSINESS
COLD TURKEY

The "cold turkey" cure for Britain's economic ills is working but may take time, says Douglas McWilliams, CBI economic adviser, in a personal view of 1992

Page 29

MCC MOVE

An Anglo-American solution to the legal wrangling over Maxwell Communication has been agreed

Page 28

ALL CLEAR

Lawrence Eagleburger, America's deputy secretary of state, has cleared the way for British Aerospace to proceed with a \$100 million order for BAE 146 aircraft to Iran

Page 28

THE POUND

US dollar 1.6678 (-0.0027)
 German mark 2.8404 (same)
 Exchange index 91.4 (-0.1)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 10%
 3-month Interbank: 11-10%
 3-month eligible bills: 10%-10%
 US: Prime Rate: 6%
 Federal Funds: 4%
 3-month Treasury Bills: 3.85-3.85%
 30-year bonds: 10.75-10.75%

CURRENCIES

London: New York:
 £ 1.6672 £ 1.6655
 £ DM2.6369 £ DM1.5175
 \$ SWF2.3378 \$ SWF1.3550
 £ Dm 1.0722 \$ 1.0718
 £ Yen 103.22 \$ 1.0745
 £ Index 91.4 \$ Index 90.9
 ECU £0.716117 \$0.763472
 £ ECU 1.396419 \$0.709805

THE City's merchant banks are facing further job losses and cost-cutting this year after another fall in the volume of mergers and acquisitions business and continuing pressure on fees.

The value of bids completed last year fell to £10 billion, compared with £12 billion in 1990 and a record £55 billion in 1989, according to *Acquisitions Monthly*, the specialist corporate finance magazine.

Fees earned by the City's merchant bankers, accountants and solicitors from mergers and acquisitions work fell from £180 million to £145 million. This compares with an estimated £800 million at the height of the merger boom in 1989.

Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, said merchant banks have been quietly laying off staff all year. "They come from both ends of the spectrum — both the younger bankers who joined in the boom and the older corporate financiers, who are leaving to make room for younger executives. Unless we see a dramatic upturn in activity, there will be a lot more redundancies."

Merchant banks are also concerned that the political uncertainty surrounding the general election this year will deter companies from launching bids.

Mr Healey said: "The financial climate and the raw materials for deals are there; only the confidence is missing."

The year saw very few large bids. Only three were worth more than £500 million: BTR's successful offer for Hawker Siddeley, Lason's failed attempt to take over Ultramar, and Williams's unsuccessful bid for Racal.

Morgan Grenfell has regained its position at the top of the league table of M&A advisers after five years. The bank advised on 11 deals, worth £2.43 billion, including the defence of Ultramar.

The bank's lead position demonstrates the success of Deutsche Bank's takeover two years ago, while proving that the bank has rid itself of any stigma from the Guinessness affair.

Michael Dobson, the chief executive, said the bank had achieved its success through hard work, adding: "It's nice to be there and we are going into 1992 with a bigger backlog of work than we have had for some time." The bank is advising Redland in its bid for Steeley, and is expanding on the Continent and in America.

Morgan Grenfell came second in 1990 and has overtaken Baring Brothers, which slumped to twelfth position in the league table. J Henry Schroder Wagg advanced from sixth to second in after working on 21 deals — more than any other bank — worth £2.36 billion.

David Challen, the head of Schroders' corporate finance department said the result was characteristic of the bank.

He added: "We would hope always to be in the top handful of banks, since we have a wide range of clients. You cannot invent M&A business but you can help your clients identify opportunities."

The surprise star of the league table was Hambros Magan, the small corporate finance boutique, which climbed seven places to fifth. The improvement was almost entirely due to its role in the

12 American merger volume in terms of dollar value plunged 31 per cent to \$145.60 billion last year from \$211.90 billion in 1990, according to preliminary estimates from Securities Data.

European merger volume fell 41 per cent to \$118.30 billion last year from \$201.90 billion in 1990, with worldwide activity falling 38 per cent to \$311.50 billion from \$496.4 billion in the previous 12 months.

THE 1990 Mergers and Acquisitions League Table

Financial adviser	No of deals	Value £m
1. Morgan Grenfell (2)	11	2,426
2. Schroders (6)	21	2,355
3. Goldman Sachs (4)	3	2,201
4. SG Warburg (8)	11	2,102
5. Hambros Magan (12)	3	1,648
6. BZW (5)	10	1,527
7. Rothschild Group (9)	7	1,459
8. Kleinwort Benson (13)	12	1,391
9. Morgan Stanley (-)	2	1,174
10. County NatWest (17)	6	652

Source: *Acquisitions Monthly* (1990 ranking in brackets)

tested at Mount Sinai, had shown no such link between the drug and blood-alcohol. Earlier this year, Dr Ernest Mario, Glaxo's deputy chairman, said he did not expect Zantac's sales to decline in the next five years.

SmithKline Beecham accepted that Zantac, on the market for 15 years, would, by reducing acid secretion, be likely to increase stomach absorption of any substance.

Glaxo, Britain's biggest pharmaceutical company, has been one of the best-performing shares on the London stock market in recent years, and its rise has been fuelled almost entirely by Zantac. In the last financial year, the drug contributed almost half Glaxo's sales and, analysis believe, more than half its profits. Twice last year, the company brought legal ac-

tions to defend Zantac's patent. SmithKline Beecham is far less dependent on Tagamet. Since the Anglo-American merger in 1989 that created the group, the drug has accounted for a little more than a tenth of sales and has been overtaken as a revenue-earner by Augmentin, an antibiotic.

Meanwhile, SmithKline Beecham received approval from the Food and Drug Administration for Relafen, a drug for rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis.

A study showed that a combination of two antiviral drugs, Wellcome's AZT compound and the experimental drug dideoxycytidine, made by Hoffmann-La Roche, seems to raise the number of white blood cells that are important in building up resistance to Aids.

The study, by a team led by Dr Carlo DiPadova and Charles Liever at Mount Sinai Medical Centre, New York, suggests that patients prescribed the drugs, especially social drinkers who drive vehicles or operate machinery, should be warned. It says Zantac (ranitidine) and Tagamet (cimetidine) increased blood-alcohol concentrations by 34 per cent and 92 per cent respectively over baseline measures in a group of 20 healthy white males aged 24 to 26.

The team also tested the effects of alcohol consumption on patients taking another anti-ulcer compound, Merck's Pepcid. In that case, it reports, changes in blood-alcohol were not significant.

A Glaxo spokesman said that in the 11 years Zantac had been on the market, it had been intensively studied. Research last year on a group of 40 patients twice the number

market crashes of 1987 and 1990.

The WM study adds that while individual fund returns will vary around the average, funds that are equity-oriented and not too exposed to property will have benefited in relative terms.

Equities, both British and overseas, dominate the results, producing returns of 20.5 and 20.8 per cent respectively, but British and overseas bonds also made good running.

The worst-performing areas, inevitably, are property and UK index-linked stocks.

With the United Kingdom property sector excluded, the average return rises to 18.6 per cent. In overseas equities,

the benefits of investment in the American market, which provided a return of more than 35 per cent for the sterling investor, were counterbalanced by significantly lower returns from continental Europe of 13 per cent and from Japan, of 14 per cent.

The Japanese result, however, reflected currency factors and the weakness of the pound, the local investor seeing a small positive return of 2 per cent.

UK bonds outstripped the results available from other monetary assets, giving a 19 per cent return against 15 per cent from overseas bonds and 13 per cent from cash and other investments.

Over the course of the year,

pressure on pound likely to continue

By COLIN NARBROUGH

THE pound, which ended last year near its annual low, is expected to come under renewed pressure today, when European and North American currency markets reopen after the holiday.

Severe pressure on sterling will reinforce City conviction that Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, may be forced to sanction a half-point increase in the base rate to prevent a run on the pound, rather than expend large amounts of official reserves, even though these stand at an historically high \$43 billion.

The money markets have been expecting an increase in base rate to 11 per cent since the Bundesbank raised both its key lending rates aggressively on December 19. On New Year's eve, the pound closed in London at DM2.8369, less than half a pfennig from the point at which the Bank of England is obliged under exchange-rate mechanism rules to support the currency.

Chris Dillow, economist at Nomura Research, said it was difficult to see what would help the pound when the markets open fully. He added: "Without recovery, backbencher calls for devaluation, or leaving the ERM, are not going to disappear, nor is a turnaround in confidence likely in the next few months."

Keith Skeoch, chief economist at James Capel, said it would be "touch and go" whether Mr Lamont could avoid a base rate rise.

Official reserves data out tomorrow will show how much the Bank of England intervened to support the pound in December. Forecasts centre on an underlying increase of about \$200 million, but this reflects the sale of the government's BT stake. Excluding this, intervention was probably modest.

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US trade policies attacked

By OUR ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

AUSTRALIA, the leader of the Cairns Group, the agricultural exporters' lobby, has attacked America for pursuing policies that could break the world up into feeding trade blocs — the Americas, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. Paul Keating, Australia's new prime minister, made his criticism in a note to President Bush during talks in Sydney.

Australia believes the way to avoid a damaging bloc formation would be to concentrate on a successful outcome to the world trade talks. America, the European Community and Japan are seeking to establish the final positions they will adopt towards the take-it-or-leave-it package of draft texts for a world pact under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The Uruguay round package was presented on December 20 by Arthur Dunkel, GATT director general, who gave warning that it could not be unravelled without threatening the whole agreement. There has been no sign of an end to the transatlantic dispute over farm subsidies.

Typically, they cover all employees, including quite senior management, provide for total job flexibility within the capacity of the individual, and make independent arbitration binding if the union and a company cannot settle differences.

Sizeable productivity gains have resulted.

Study could hit Glaxo's top seller

By MARTIN WALLER

AN AMERICAN medical study has suggested that Zantac, the world's biggest-selling pharmaceutical and the main money-spinner for Glaxo, the drug group, should carry a warning to patients. Research has indicated that it might raise blood-alcohol concentrations in social drinkers.

Another long-established and widely prescribed anti-ulcer drug, Tagamet, made by SmithKline Beecham, is also pinpointed. Both companies' share prices are likely to come under pressure today as the City takes note of the study, in the journal of the American Medical Association.

Glaxo said other studies had found no link between Zantac and blood-alcohol. SmithKline Beecham described the study as "academic", since patients were advised not to drink heavily.

The study, by a team led by Dr Carlo DiPadova and Charles Liever at Mount Sinai Medical Centre, New York, suggests that patients prescribed the drugs, especially social drinkers who drive vehicles or operate machinery, should be warned. It says Zantac (ranitidine) and Tagamet (cimetidine) increased blood-alcohol concentrations by 34 per cent and 92 per cent respectively over baseline measures in a group of 20 healthy white males aged 24 to 26.

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Mario: Zantac forecast

Pension funds 10% ahead of inflation

By OUR CITY STAFF

DESPITE the stock market upsets of last year, British pension funds more than kept their collective head above water, producing an average return of almost 17 per cent and a real return, discounting inflation, of more than 10 per cent.

The WM Company, which has analysed the performance of British pension fund portfolios over the past 18 years, says that returns over a longer period than just 12 months are also keeping ahead of inflation.

Over the past five years, it says, the average return on a pension fund has been almost 10 per cent, despite the stock

market crashes of 1987 and 1990.

The WM study adds that while individual fund returns will vary around the average, funds that are equity-oriented and not too exposed to property will have benefited in relative terms.

Equities, both British and overseas, dominate the results, producing returns of 20.5 and 20.8 per cent respectively, but British and overseas bonds also made good running.

The worst-performing areas, inevitably, are property and UK index-linked stocks.

With the United Kingdom property sector excluded, the average return rises to 18.6 per cent. In overseas equities,

equities rose as a proportion of the average fund, from just over 70 per cent at the start of 1991 to almost 80 per cent. WM says this reflects a switch out of United Kingdom bonds and cash into overseas equities in particular, where the proportion of the total rose to 23 per cent from 18 per cent over the year.

Within overseas equities there was a marked movement towards equips (up from 18 per cent of the total to 24 per cent) and away from both continental Europe (down from 38 per cent to 33 per cent) and America (down from 29 per cent to 28 per cent). These changes run contrary to the trends of recent years, according to WM.

Source: WM Company

Main categories	Estimate for 1991
UK equities	20.5
Overseas equities	20.8
UK bonds	18.4
Overseas bonds	15.5
Index-linked	5.5
Cash/other investments	12.2